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VOL. XIV.

THE

LIFE AND REMAINS

OF THE

REV. RICHARD CECIL, M.A.,

MINISTER OF ST JOHN'S CHAPEL, BEDFORD ROW,
LONDON.

CORRECTED AND REVISED BY JOSIAH PRATT, B.D., F.A.S.

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MEMOIR, ETC.

Mr Cecil was born in Chiswell Street, London, on Nov. 8, 1748. His father and grandfather were scarlet dyers to the East India Company. His mother was the only child of Mr Grosvenor, a merchant in London, and brother to the Rev. Dr Grosvenor, the well-known author of the *Mourner*. To some excellent traits of her character mentioned in Mr C.'s works, may be added that of her benevolence to the poor. In order to enlarge her resources, she employed herself in working fine-work, according to the fashion of the day, which she sold for their benefit. Richard was born after his mother was fifty years old, and after an interval of ten years had elapsed since the birth of her preceding child. It is worthy of remark, that during her travail with this child of her old age her heart was overwhelmed with sorrow. Her years, and other circumstances not necessary to be here mentioned, raised in her mind the most terrific apprehensions. Yet this child was the comfort and the honour of her latter days!

Mr Cecil's father inherited a large tract of ground,

on which were his dwelling-house, dye-house, and garden. During the early part of Richard's life, this tract of ground was the spot of his pastime, in the interval of school-hours. His life was here endangered by several adventures. The following was remarkable: His father had in this ground several large tanks of water, one of which was sunk into the earth, and in winter was frequently covered with ice. A hole was made in the ice, for the purpose of supplying the horses with water. At this hole Richard was playing with a stick, till he suddenly plunged under the ice. The men had received particular orders over-night to go to work in a part of the dye-house from which this piece of water was not visible; but it is remarkable that, for reasons which could not be assigned, they went to work at an opposite part, where it was directly before their eyes. One of the men thought he saw a scarlet cloak appear at the hole broke in the ice, and resolved to go and see what it was. In attempting to take it out, he discovered it to be the scarlet coat of his young master. He was taken out apparently dead; but, after long effort, was recovered.

About the same time he was caught by his coat in a mill-wheel, and must have been crushed in a few moments, had he not, with wonderful presence of mind, thrust his foot against the horse's face, by which the mill was stopped and he disentangled. Several other extraordinary deliverances occurred about this time; but all, as I have often heard him lament, during his thoughtless days, were passed over without improvement. Beyond the period of his juvenile years, I might mention many instances of the preservation of his invaluable life—"immortal till his work was done"—but they

would lengthen this memoir beyond the intended bound. Within the recollection of many friends was that of his horse falling, and throwing him before a loaded cart, the wheel of which went over his hat, pushing his head from beneath it, and bruising his shoulder.* "The beloved

* This deliverance was so remarkable that some of the circumstances deserve to be recorded. It took place on Wednesday, Jan. 12, 1803. He had ridden over the stones the day before toward Bond Street, but finding them slippery in consequence of a frost, he determined (as he had occasion to go again on this day) to be particularly cautious. In order, therefore, to avoid riding over the stones, he went round by the New Road; but in turning into Oxford Street, his horse's legs flew from under him, in consequence of his stepping on some ice, and Mr C. was thrown off upon his face at the moment that a heavily-loaded cart was passing. His shoulder was in the track of the cart wheel, and he distinctly felt it go over him, and bear against his head. The crown of his hat was considerably pressed in by the wheel against his temples. Had he been thrown a few inches farther, it must have gone directly over his head. He was immediately carried into a shop, where he received kind attention, and was thence brought home in a hackney coach. On examination it was found, though his arm was much bruised and discoloured, that no serious injury had been received. He attributed this, under the mercy of God, to his shoulder not having borne the whole weight of the wheel, which, being broad, was, at the moment it was going over, eased, as he supposed, from his shoulder, by the inner part of it being raised by a stone rather more elevated in the pavement than the rest. In this situation of danger he was mercifully preserved from broken bones or instant death. He hung up his hat in his study (with the indentation and dirt) as a memento.

He said that he had learned three lessons from this providence:

First, that while we are called on to use all proper means and precautions of safety, God will sometimes show us our absolute and immediate dependence on him, by making the very means which we employ the occasion of bringing us to the very borders of the grave. He thought it his duty to avoid the stones as much as possible, and yet here danger met him.

A second lesson gathered from this event was, the comparative triflingness of the cases which occupy and harass the mind. He

of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long."—(Deut. xxxiii. 12.)

After these instances of preservation, both in Mr Cecil's earlier and latter years, I return to the days of his youth. His father, being a member of the Established Church, took his son with him on Sabbaths to his parish church. His mother was a Dissenter, and a woman of real piety. Her family, for generations back, were pious characters. One of them, a Mr Cope, used to send money and other support to the Nonconformists in prison; which his daughter, the grandmother of Mr Cecil, took to them. It was a special mercy to Mr C. that his mother was a partaker of the same grace with her ancestors. She laboured early to impress his mind, both by precept and by example: she bought him Janeway's "Token for Children," which greatly affected him, and made him retire into a corner to pray; but his serious beginnings wore off, and he at

had been much exercised and depressed by some circumstances of domestic trial. They had almost wholly occupied his thoughts, and appeared of deep interest and importance. But he compared them now with that far heavier trial which his family was so near encountering, of seeing him brought home a corpse, and he then felt them to be comparatively trifles, and to be treated as trifles.

A third lesson, he said, was very obvious, but it was now brought home with peculiar force to him, and that was—to be always ready. "I went out yesterday, and I came in again with safety. I am going out to-day, and I shall return when my business is finished"—"No!" the Lord may say concerning me, "you shall return no more. Your time is come. My messenger waits for you with a summons!"

He attended divine service on the following Sunday, though he did not think it prudent to preach. Thanks were publicly returned by him in the congregation, and the psalms sung in the course of the service bore such an allusion to his deliverance, and were so admirably selected for this purpose, that the congregation was evidently much affected by the service.

length made such progress in sin, that he gloried in his shame.

Mr C.'s father, intending him for business, placed him in a considerable house in the City; from this he was removed to another, where he staid longer; but returned home through illness. He felt wholly averse to trade, but was devoted to literature and the arts. At a very early age he wrote pieces, which he sent on hazard to the editors of the periodical publications, who thought them worthy of insertion. His father, a man of extensive reading, and who had himself received a classical education, accidentally met with a poetical piece which he greatly admired: his son affirmed himself the author of it; but his father thought it incredible, till his son, taking another subject given him by his father, and retiring a short time, produced a poem which satisfied his father that he was the author of the one in question.

Mr Cecil had a marvellous power and flexibility of mind, which would have rendered him distinguished in whatever he pursued. He had an affection for all the arts, but his predominant passion was for painting. This he pursued insatiably. He attended all picture sales, and practised at home; and was so intent on his point, that he set out, unknown to his parents, on a ramble to France, from a desire to see the paintings of the greatest masters, and would have proceeded to Rome had not the means of travelling failed. He returned home, and continued to live with his father; who, perceiving his ardour for painting did not abate, at length proposed his going to Rome (where he had an acquaintance) as an artist. To this proposal Mr C. agreed; but a circumstance took place which prevented it, and he

remained still under the roof of his father for some time, sunk in the depths of sin, and hardening his conscience by reading books of infidelity, till he became a professed infidel himself. He endeavoured to instil the same principles into others: with some he awfully succeeded, whom he since endeavoured to reclaim, but in vain.

While Mr C. was proceeding in such a course of evil, it pleased God by his Spirit to rouse his mind to reflections, which gave a turn to his future life.

Lying one night in bed, he was contemplating the case of his mother. "I see," said he, within himself, "two unquestionable facts: First, My mother is greatly afflicted, in circumstances, body, and mind; and yet I see that she cheerfully bears up under all, by the support she derives from constantly retiring to her closet and her Bible. Secondly, That she has a secret spring of comfort of which I know nothing; while I, who give an unbounded loose to my appetites, and seek pleasure by every means, seldom or never find it. If, however, there is any such secret in religion, why may not I attain it as well as my mother?—I will immediately seek it of God." He instantly rose in his bed, and began to pray. But he was soon damped in his attempt, by recollecting that much of his mother's comfort seemed to arise from her faith in Christ. "Now," thought he, "this Christ have I ridiculed: He stands much in my way, and can form no part of my prayers." In utter confusion of mind, therefore, he lay down again. Next day, however, he continued to pray to "the Supreme Being:" he began to consult books and to attend preachers: his difficulties were gradually removed, and his objections answered; and his course of

life began to amend. He now listened to the pious admonitions of his mother, which he had before affected to receive with pride and scorn: yet they had fixed themselves in his heart, like a barbed arrow; and, though the effects were at the time concealed from her observation, yet tears would fall from his eyes as he passed along the streets, from the impression she had left on his mind. Now, he would discourse with her, and hear her without outrage; which led her to hope that a gracious principle was forming in his heart, and more especially as he then attended the preaching of the Word. Thus he made some progress; but felt no small difficulty in separating from his favourite connections. Light, however, broke into his mind, till he gradually discovered that Jesus Christ, so far from "standing in his way," * was *the* only *Way*, *the Truth*, *and the Life*, to all *that come unto God by Him.*

While Mr C. pursued this new course, his father began to take alarm; and said to him one evening, "I know not what to do with you. I have made two experiments for your subsistence: I have offered to bring you into my own business, which at my death will be as good as an estate to you; you have rejected all my proposals. You now seem to be taking a religious turn; but I tell you plainly, that if you connect yourself with Dissenters or Sectaries, I will do nothing for you, living or dying; but if you choose to go regularly into the Church, I will not only bear the expense of a University, for which you have had some education, but I will buy you a living on your entering into orders." Mr C. promised to consider this proposal; and, finding his father continued in the same mind, he went

* Mr Cecil's own expression.

(on the recommendation of Dr Bacon, an old family acquaintance) to Queen's College, Oxford, May 19, 1773.

I have heard him mention, with much feeling, many deep and secret conflicts of mind with which he was exercised while at College; added to which, he had to meet many insults which profligate men offer to piety. Under these impressions, he was one day walking in the Physic Gardens, where he observed a very fine pomegranate tree, cut almost through the stem, near the root. On asking the gardener the reason of this, "Sir," said he, "this tree used to shoot so strong, that it bore nothing but leaves. I was therefore obliged to cut it in this manner; and when it was almost cut through, then it began to bear plenty of fruit." The gardener's explanation of this act conveyed a striking illustration to Mr C.'s mind, and he went back to his rooms comforted and instructed by this image.

On September 22, 1776, Mr Cecil was ordained deacon on the title of the Rev. Mr Pugh, of Rauceby, in Lincolnshire. In the Lent term following, he took the degree of B.A. with great credit; and soon after took his name off the books. On February 23, 1777, he was admitted to priest's orders. With Mr Pugh he staid but a short time; for, at Mr Pugh's request, he went to serve three churches in Leicestershire. These churches were Thornton, Bagworth, and Markfield. The object of his going thither was that of serving the churches till Mr Abbott, the son of the deceased vicar, should be able to take the charge of them. The *end* of his being sent thither appears still more important.

On his going forth in this beginning of his mission,

he found little of real religion in these churches; but by means of his ministry, a general attention to the truth was excited among the people, and "many of them believed and clave unto the Lord." Mr Abbott in particular, and a sister of his, owed to Mr Cecil, under the divine blessing, their knowledge and belief of the truth; and at length a flourishing congregation was formed in each of the churches.

Mr C. laboured to awaken the mind of Mr Abbott, not merely to the necessity of embracing the truth, but that he might "continue in the things which he had learned," and preach among the people "the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to his trust." Mr Cecil, anxious that these

"Plants of his hand, and children of his prayer,"

should not be left like sheep without a shepherd, earnestly urged on Mr Abbot his responsibility as a minister—the obligation of making full proof of his ministry—and the infinite consequences attaching to his holy function. It pleased God to bless his endeavours; and Mr Abbott not only received the truth in the *knowledge* of it, but in the *love* of it, and became a faithful and upright minister. He died in early life.

On Mr Cecil's return to Rauceby he found a letter informing him that, by the interest of friends, two small livings had been obtained for him at Lewes, in Sussex. This was a great disappointment to Mr Pugh, who at that time wished to go to Bath; but he generously dismissed his curate, and accordingly Mr C. proceeded to take possession of his livings.

At Lewes, residing in a damp situation, near one of his churches, he was long afflicted with a rheumatic

disorder in his head; and at length was disabled for duty for several months, and was under the necessity of procuring a curate. I have heard him mention, with much feeling, a very singular providence which occurred to him on his going from London to Lewes to serve these churches. Instead of his leaving town early in the morning, the farrier who shod his horse detained him till noon, in consequence of which he did not arrive on East Grinstead Common till after it was dark. On this Common he met a man on horseback, who appeared to be intoxicated, and ready to fall from his horse at every step. Mr C. called to him, and warned him of his danger, which the man disregarding, with his usual benevolence he rode up to him, in order to prevent his falling, when the man immediately seized the reins of Mr C.'s horse; who, perceiving he was in bad hands, endeavoured to break away, on which the man threatened to knock him down if he repeated the attempt. Three other men on horseback immediately rode up, placing Mr C. in the midst of them. On perceiving his danger, it struck him, "Here is an occasion of faith!" and that gracious direction also occurred to him—"Call upon me in the time of trouble, and I will deliver thee." He secretly lifted up his heart to God, entreating that deliverance which He alone could effect. One of the men, who seemed to be the captain of the gang, asked him who he was, and whither he was going. Mr C. here recurred to a principle to which his mind was habituated—that "nothing needs a lie." He therefore told them very frankly his name, and whither he was going. The leader said, "Sir, I know you, and have heard you preach at Lewes; let the gentleman's horse go; we wish you good-night."

Mr C. had about him sixteen pounds. Queen Anne's Bounty, belonging to his churches, which he had been to town to receive, and which at that time was to him a large sum.

It may not be improper to add here, that both the livings brought in only about £80 per annum; and when Mr Cecil's health rendered it necessary for him to engage a curate, from that time he derived no emolument from them, as the income was only adequate to the expense of a curate. He held these livings for no other but the express purpose of continuing the preaching of the truth in that place, and had many difficulties to contend with in carrying his point; but he persevered in this way for many years, till he could resign them, satisfactorily, to the late Rev. Mr Dale.

Although Mr C. was a single man while rector of two livings at Lewes, yet possessing no personal property, he was always straitened in his pecuniary affairs, particularly so during the first years of his ministry.

In June 1777, while Mr C. lived at Lewes, he lost his pious mother, whose death was made of singular benefit to him. He went on the evening of her death, under the solemn impressions which it had made on his mind, to the Lock Chapel, for which service he was previously engaged, and preached a most effective sermon. His father did not long survive her: he died in February 1779. Both his father and mother lie buried in a family vault in Bunhill Fields, with five of his own children—Tabitha, John Christian, Theophilus, Henry, and Israel.

Mr C. continued to be so much affected with the rheumatic complaint in the head, that he removed from

Lewes to London, and lived at Islington for the recovery of his health. During this time he preached at different churches and chapels in London.

For some years he preached a lecture at Lothbury, at six o'clock on the Sabbath morning. He found the walk, at that early hour in winter, very dangerous, as most of the lamps were gone out, and few persons stirring except those who wander for prey. He has often made me thrill with horror at hearing him state the meeting on his way thither of wretches with their dark lanterns, with designs still darker: but God graciously preserved him amidst these dangers. He found, however, that this undertaking was not only dangerous, but that the additional fatigue of this early service became too great a demand on his strength; and, on both accounts, he engaged a hackney coach to take him to and from the church during the latter years of his going thither. At this time he had the whole duty of St John's, and also an evening lecture at a chapel in Orange Street, Leicester Fields, at that period a regular chapel in the Establishment.

In course of time, notwithstanding this precaution, his health declined, and, after many long and earnest intreaties of his friends, he reluctantly relinquished the lecture at Lothbury, whither he used to go with peculiar pleasure, and where many, who were taking an early walk on a summer morning, wandering in thoughtlessly, heard and embraced the truth, and are some out of the number of those who became his joy and crown. By this resignation also he lost nothing but labour and care, except the satisfaction which it afforded him of ministering to this people: for the emolument arising from the endowment but barely covered his expenses.

The chapel at Orange Street, where he preached on Sabbath evenings, and on Wednesday evenings for many years, being about to be repaired, it was relinquished, and the chapel in Long Acre was engaged, in conjunction with his friend, the Rev. Henry Foster, who had the morning duty: here the same congregation attended.

Mr C. was solicited to take the Sunday evening lecture, preached at Christ Church, Spitalfields. He entered on this charge in September 1797, a time which I am not likely to forget. The first Sabbath evening that he went thither, he left in my care a dying infant (as was supposed), given over in its paroxysms, with scarcely a remaining trace of life, and which he did not expect to find alive on his return. For this did our son for Mr C. in his work—"the walls were to be built in troublous times;" and he went forth sorrowing, though with a troubled heart. It pleased God however to restore our child, like another Lazarus, at that time: but He took him into His own gracious arms in the first year of his age.

Many have very naturally conjectured, that from these diversified engagements, Mr Cecil's pecuniary advantages must have been very considerable: but it was not for lucre's sake that he thus spent himself. In whatever he was prodigal, it was for God, and not for gain. I have often heard him say, that the Spitalfields lectureship was rather a loss than a gain to him, in this respect, as the distance rendered it necessary for him to employ a coach for the evening, except when any friends took him in their own.

Mr C. had the charge of this lecture, and of that at Long Acre chapel alternately, each time for three sun-

cessive years, with Mr Foster—the gentleman who endowed the lecture at Spitalfields having specified that the same clergyman should hold that lectureship only three years in immediate succession. The appointment is vested in the Court of Assistants of the Weavers' Company, who first called Mr Foster to this charge. He opened the lecture in September 1784, and was followed by Mr C. in 1787; Mr Foster being reappointed in the years 1790, 1796, and 1802; and Mr. C. in 1793 and 1799. The intention of the founder of this lecture extended only to its being preached from September to April inclusive, but both Mr F. and Mr C. continued it through the whole year. I need not speak of the vast congregation which assembled in that immense temple, the very sight of which was most animating, and where the stillness and attention of the numerous poor were most interesting. Mr C. was, however, obliged by ill health to relinquish this arduous post—nearly the whole duty of which was discharged for him by Mr Pratt, during the latter three years of his holding the lectureship, from 1799 to 1801.

I return to Mr Cecil's most important sphere of duty at St John's Chapel, Bedford Row. In the year 1780, he was invited to turn his thoughts to this chapel, at that time the largest Church of England chapel in London. Having been much neglected, it required a large sum for its repair. Mr C. went, therefore, merely to look at it; for, as he never was possessed of any property, he chose to run no hazards. A lady of fortune,* however, offered to secure him from any ultimate loss, by her bond, should the undertaking not succeed;

* Mrs Wilberforce, of John Street, King's Road, aunt to William Wilberforce.

but as the chapel prospered, she was never called on. Yet, wishing to testify her regard to Mr Cecil, she gave him a very considerable sum of money toward building the present vestry and the rooms adjoining, to which several other friends contributed, and by whom the expense of the building, amounting to several hundred pounds, was defrayed. The former vestry, being very small, was made into a pew, and appropriated to the use of the minister. At the same time, a gentleman in the law offered to lend Mr C. all the money that might be required for the repair of the chapel, without any other security than his note.

Mr Cecil's mind was at length made up as to engaging in this affair. He thought, that though the chapel, so encumbered, might not yield any considerable advantage in his life-time, yet that the call appeared providential and the sphere useful. Accordingly, in March 1780, he entered on his ministry at St John's. At this time his whole income was but £80 per annum, which he received for the lecture preached at Orange Street chapel.

The pious desire of his friend just mentioned, to promote the interests of religion, led him to hazard so large a sum on this occasion: he may be justly termed, by his liberality, the nursing father, both of St John's and of its minister, throughout these years of Mr Cecil's life, and afterwards remained the uniform friend of his bereaved family. He was one of the first who proposed a subscription for their support, when that arising from the few remaining years of the lease should fail.

This kind friend, Mr C. considered, and highly valued, as his coadjutor in every interest that respected this place and people. In this object, they were of one

mind and one heart; and Mr C. often very feelingly expressed, not only his obligations, but how great would be his loss, should he ever be deprived of this faithful friend—from whose observations and ever watchful eye he derived much advantage; nor could anything more strongly evince this gentleman's disinterested attachment to St John's, than his unceasing and unwearied attentions there, without any other motive or reward than the pleasure of observing its prosperity and success.

William Cardale, Esq., of Bedford Row, this invaluable friend of my dear husband, not only advanced a large sum for the first repair, on Mr Cecil's engaging in the chapel, but was ever ready to assist him with such additional sums as were continually and necessarily expended, in order to obtain for the congregation that complete accommodation for which St John's has been remarkable.

Any inattention to the established economy of the chapel was grievous to him; and he strictly watched over all abuses, particularly that so frequently observed in various churches in London—imposition or misbehaviour on the part of the pew-openers. He set his face determinedly against this; and enjoined on them, as the condition of their holding their situations, that they should, without previously receiving a bribe, accommodate with a seat, when practicable, every respectable stranger; but finding that, through the frailty of human nature, his injunctions were in one form or another violated, and being fully determined on carrying his point, he engaged a person both to superintend the conduct of the pew-openers, and to keep a watchful eye over every part of the chapel during the time of divine service. This he did with a

view to prevent intrusion of such persons as occasionally dropped in, and who therefore had no regular seat. His very soul abhorred the thought that any one should be discouraged or prevented from hearing the free offer of salvation, who did not pay his way into a seat; and though he was aware that his liberality might be abused, yet his grand object was obtained, that dying creatures should be encouraged to hear the message of the living God.

He was a great admirer of order and punctuality in in the church. There was in consequence much more attention paid at St John's than in most other places, that all parts of the service should proceed in a regular succession, without any intermission, from the time when it commenced till it ended. The clerk constantly called on a Sunday morning and took the time from a regulator in Mr Cecil's study. He appointed that the bell should begin precisely at half-past ten o'clock—that the organist should begin instantly on the stopping of the bell—that the reader should be in the desk ready to begin the prayers on the organ ceasing—and that throughout the whole service, the same uniform punctuality should be preserved.

At St John's, Mr C. performed all the duty for three years, without receiving any emolument, as the hearers were few, the expenses and interest of the money laid out upon it great, and the pews much underset: Mr C. objected to having them raised, lest it should discourage the mind of the old hearers, and discourage others from attending; an annual sum of £25 was moreover paid to the Rector of St Andrew's for the privilege of the pulpit in the afternoon. These, together with the continual and heavy expenses, arising from his zeal to

render the chapel commodious to his congregation, occasioned his income from it to be much more confined, for many years, than was generally conceived. He sought not theirs, but them: during, therefore, his first years as the minister of St John's, his income but very gradually increased, which will account for his being so involved in his circumstances the greater part of his life. During the first eighteen years, that is, from 1780 to 1798, he made a point of paying the interest of the money lent for the repair of the chapel. A legacy of £100 left me by a relation, and another £100 given by a friend,* and every smaller legacy or sum given, and all that could possibly be spared from domestic demands, were immediately devoted to paying off the principal, which was at length thus reduced to five hundred pounds, as appeared by his accounts, examined by his friends during his confinement in December 1798.

In gratitude to Mr Cecil's friends I ought to mention that, in the afflictive state of his health just referred to, they were anxious to know his circumstances; and finding, on investigation, that part of the debt for the first repair of the chapel (about £500) was not paid off, they generously made a subscription to defray it. An overplus of about £200 remaining, they put this into the Funds for his use; but an affecting circumstance in his family obliged him to sell it out some time after.

When he entered on his ministry at St John's, he had a difficult and arduous path to tread. He had to preach to a people inimical to the spirit of the gospel, on the one hand; and to make his way through the

* John Thornton, Esq.

prejudices of the religious part of his auditory, on the other—who, not comprehending his aim, were ready to pronounce on his plan, as shunning "to declare the whole counsel of God." Yet he was wisely imitating the example of his Master, in delivering the truth as they who heard were able to bear it, and thus forming a lodgment in their minds, and preparing them for the full display of all the doctrines of the gospel.

Mr C. possessed, naturally, a comprehensive mind and strong judgment. When it pleased God, "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness," to shine into his heart, all his natural powers received a new direction, and under divine influence became subservient to the glorious objects which he had discovered and laboured to make known to others. Persons are often led to approve or disapprove from results, either as they are successful or unsuccessful, rather than from abstract views; the result, in the instance of St John's Chapel, clearly proves the wisdom of the course which Mr C. pursued.

Mr C. had for many years suffered greatly from a complaint supposed to be sciatica. On being seized by a more violent and acute attack, a consultation of the faculty was held on his disorder on Friday, December 7, 1798; the result of which was, that he was prohibited from preaching any more while the existing symptoms continued. A schirrus in the cæcum was now apprehended, and his condition was thought dangerous. The following Sabbath a most affecting scene took place at St John's. He had been announced on the preceding Sabbath to preach a sermon on the morning of this day, December 9, for the children of the Sabbath

school attending the chapel, and another in the evening for their parents. Notwithstanding his prohibition by his medical friends, he determined to make an attempt to address the people once more. Many circumstances conspired to render the scene affecting. A friend remarked, that a side view which he caught of his face, before he uttered a word, chilled him to the heart. Sunk—worn—dejected! "The strong was, indeed, become as tow! and the mighty fallen!" His text added to the solemnity of the scene:—"He which testifieth these things, saith, Surely, I come quickly. Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

He told his congregation that he was preaching contrary to the advice of his physicians, and that he should not be able to meet them in the evening. He had not preached more than five minutes before it was visible that he was in extreme pain, and his feeble tone of voice proved that he was worn down. He could not continue his discourse more than twenty minutes, and then dismissed the congregation—not with the usual benediction, but in the last words of the Bible immediately following his text. The presentiment of many, that this sermon would close his ministry, gathered strength from his having chosen the concluding subject of the Scriptures, and ending his discourse with the benediction following it. After this period it pleased God, whose "ways are not our ways nor His thoughts our thoughts," to add twelve years to his life.

During the above confinement, in the winter of 1798, Mr Cecil put down for his own use some of the particular impressions made on his mind through this illness, but never designed it for publication. He had many MSS. by him which were intended for the press,

but his declining health, together with his public occupations, prevented their being finished. On this account he had solemnly enjoined me to consume all his papers, whenever his death should take place—assuring me that they were in too unfinished a state for public benefit.

In his last illness at Clifton, of which notice will be taken hereafter, when he apprehended that he should not live to return to town, he repeated his injunction —with the most anxious entreaty that I would relieve his mind, and meet his wishes, by destroying all his papers after his decease. Finding that nothing short of my giving him a faithful promise to execute his command would pacify his agitated mind, I reluctantly yielded, and promised to execute his desire, on one condition only, namely, that he would allow me to preserve, for my own use, one MS., written in 1798 (which I knew was not unfit for publication), and also permit me to subjoin it to this memoir whenever it should be made public; to which he agreed.*

Mr Cecil, however, contrary to his apprehensions, lived to reach home, when his determination respecting his papers was put in force by his own hand. He consumed every other MS. but the one I had before re-

* Mr Cecil's reply to his son Israel, on his mentioning to his father his feelings on reading this MS., then in the possession of a friend, may not be uninteresting. "I do not wonder that you felt as you express, at reading my feelings on passing through the deep waters. Alas! you saw but a small part of what occurred; but 'by these things men live; and in all these things is the life of my spirit.' They are what a university cannot yield; nor is a prince, as such, favoured with a taste of them. I sincerely pray that you may know how 'a thorn in the flesh' becomes a special blessing."

deemed from the flames; and which is, by an after arrangement, attached to his works. It will appear, both from this MS. and from the following extracts (taken chiefly from my own private memorandums, and which are distinct from the fragment published in his works), that during this confinement his heart was receiving important lessons in the school of affliction.

Saturday night, 8th Dec. 1798.—"This is a mysterious dispensation; but I know it is a wise one. I did not think of ever feeling so much pain. I have not prayed against that. I am now to glorify Him by suffering—I am not afraid of consequences—*It is well!*"

Dec. 10.—To the Rev. Mr Newton, who was dropping him a seasonable word of consolation, he replied, "It is consistent neither with reason nor religion to oppose sufferings to the love of God; for, 'whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth: and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.'" In the evening of the same day to another friend (the Rev. Mr Venn), he said, "I am not afraid to die; but I am afraid to be worn out by pain. Nature shrinks at this prospect."

Wednesday 12.—To the Rev. Mr Pratt he said—"My illness gives me stronger hold of two points: 1st, God must be brought near, to be lived on and fled to. 2d, Comfort, to be sensible to my heart, must spring from God's making himself sensible to me. There must be an incarnation. I must, by faith, lay hold of my God—as he became man!"

Dec. 14.—In bed.—To the same friend, who spoke to him of the rumoured death of Buonaparte, and the failure of the French expedition against Egypt, he re-

plied—"But is Egypt to be left in its present horrid state of depravity and wretchedness under the Turks? How unsearchable are the ways of God! He giveth no account of His matters! If God should restore me again to health, I have determined to study nothing but the Bible. Literature is inimical to spirituality, if it be not kept under with a strong hand. A man ought to call in from every quarter whatever may assist him to understand, explain, and illustrate the Bible: but there—in its light and life—is all that is good for man. All important truth is there; and I feel that no comfort enters sick curtains from any other quarter. My state is an admonition to young men. I have been too much occupied in preparing to live, and too little in living. I have read too much from curiosity, and for mental gratification. I was literary, when I should have been active. We trifle too much. Let us do something for God. The man of God is a man of feeling and activity. I feel and would urge with all possible strength on others, that Jesus Christ is our *All and in All.*"

On another occasion he said—"In all my sufferings, except when my pain is extreme, I think I can in some degree say, I take pleasure in them; but, when I am in torture, I seem to be glad that I can bear it without a murmur, which I have not felt that I know of; but I cannot say, I take pleasure in it. As to being broken down, I perfectly agree to it; distress, poverty, reproach, infirmity, are fine things to humble a high spirit. The physicians do not know my case, but I do; it is the finger of God, and I am to learn from it various important lessons, and among the rest the sufficiency of his grace. I have prayed thrice: sure I ought to be content with the answer to St Paul!"

To a friend he said—"It has been a night of great pain, but it was a night appointed me by Jesus Christ, and sure it must be a good one that he appoints! Had I laid down my life for you, your good nights would have been my anxious care." At another time, "I have great peace—not a ruffled breeze, night nor day—and this is all grounded on the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Give up that, and I should have no sleep to-night. All is pitch darkness without it—dark as a Socinian—dark as a Moralist. There is no light, but what Christ brings." At another time, while attending him in the night, he said to me—"It is an extraordinary statement, that, though God loves me much better than you do, yet he does not relieve me. I am to partake, as a member of Christ, the sufferings of Christ. 'It pleased the Lord to bruise him,' for the good of man; and he afflicts man for his good. If I recover, I shall be a better preacher—that is, I shall be more humble! I have many comforts; but perhaps I shall be so sick as to say, 'Lord! it is enough, take away my life.' I am now often thankful for five minutes' ease, and I wonder I was not much more so for that of fifty years." At another time—"God knows my case, and in pain, in difficulty, in sickness, he says—'It is I; be not afraid: Commit yourself to me!' Jesus Christ is my great hold: nothing can happen without his knowledge and permission."

To one, who spoke to him of his illness, he said—"It is all Christ. I keep death in view. If God does not please to raise me up, he intends me better. 'I know whom I have believed.' How little we think of improving the time we have, while we have opportunity! I find everything but religion, vanity. I am ready,

even on this sick-bed, to preach to preachers. I ask myself, what is my hold and support—what will remain with me when everything else is washed away? To recollect a promise of the Bible—this is substance! Nothing will do but the Bible. If I read authors, and hear different opinions, I cannot say, 'This is truth!' I cannot grasp it as substance: but the Bible gives me something to hold. I have learnt more within these curtains, than from all the books I ever read. I sometimes speculate on the idea of a soul's leaving the body, and wandering forth into the world of space: but it is alone—wandering in solitude. It is wretched because alone; to say nothing of misery: but let a ray from Christ shine on that soul, and no matter where it is—it is happy!"

The violence of this attack was mercifully abated, and Mr Cecil was so far recovered, that he ventured, on the 24th Feb. 1799, to preach the evening lecture at St John's. Though he began with the precaution of reading his sermons, yet he found the exertion too much for his broken state of strength and spirits, and he was convinced that God called him to retirement and repose. Such a dispensation, to a mind like his, required no common measure of faith and patience. He was, at length, by a blessing on the means used, enabled to resume his usual duty, though under much remaining infirmity.

Speaking of his afflicted state, he said, "My dispensation is wonderful. That I am able to meet the frequent returns of my public duty is almost miraculous. Not one of my hearers has any idea of the quantity of pain I endure in the course of twenty-four hours; and yet, if it were ever to be upon me at the moment I was

called to preach, it would be utterly impossible for me to begin."

But it was not only during the above period that Mr C. suffered much pain; but year after year it remained as a clog on his efforts, and as a worm at the root of his constitution. Frequently, after suffering greatly all the preceding night, he has gone forth in the morning to his public duty so feeble and emaciated, that I have dreaded the consequences of his entering the pulpit. But, still stimulated and animated by love and zeal, he went through his duty, by divine assistance, without any appearance of his suffering state, or any other perceptible effect, save that feeling and unction which it produced. As the face of Moses, when he came down from the Mount, was seen to shine: so it was evident, in Mr Cecil's discourses, that he had not suffered so many things in vain; but that he was refined in the furnace of affliction, to show forth His glory who had called him. He acquired a more keen perception and feeling of the vanity of all human things: he stripped off the mask from the face of the world—showed its poverty and emptiness—its enchantments—its snares—and its pretensions, as delusive and fallacious: he drew aside the veil, and exhibited those glorious realities in reversion for the faithful, on which his soul delighted to dwell, and of which he is now in the full enjoyment.

Thus exercised with affliction, he persevered in preaching (making use of a seat in the pulpit), till paralysis deprived the church of his labours. His patience under his great and long sufferings was surprising. By them many interior experiences and excellent ideas were wrung from him, while a word of complaint was never heard to come forth from his lips.

In June 1798, previous to the above confinement, Mr C. sent the following reflections to a friend under affliction, to whom they were peculiarly appropriate, and by whose favour I obtain them :—

"*Sunday noon.*—In great pain; disposed to preach again, on a new text—'She answered, It is well.' That is, God is *wiser* than I am. 'He knoweth the way that I take, and when I am tried, I shall come forth as gold.' He knows how to bring good out of this evil. What can he take away that he cannot make up to me? Pain, loss, solitude—what are ye? The way home! He knows the way—that is enough. He has promised to be with me in the way—that is more than enough.

"'It is well'—that is, God is *mightier* than I am. He can make this dying and painful way, the way of life—the way of comfort—the way of joy, as well as holiness. He has done it ten thousand times; I have seen it done. 'What child is he whom his Father chasteneth not?' I would be a son, but not scourged. I am a fool, whom even experience can scarcely make wise. I see ——, and ——, and ——, whom he does not chastise; all professors, but are they sons? I see ——, and ——, who are sinking under their troubles, and going to Satan for comfort, because they are not sons.

"'It is well'—that is, He is *better* than I am. He has *thoughts of peace*, while I indulge *thoughts of evil.* He means better than I can give him credit for. He asks me for nothing but time and trust, in order to make the whole plain and gracious to my eye: 'No!' say I; 'show it me *now*, and it sufficeth.' 'What!' saith he—'Am I *alone* not to be trusted? How

many of my creatures have you trusted for what you could not see! How often have you rested on dust and ashes, as on a sure foundation! Go—go—and learn your horn-book, and then you will say without stammering, '*It is well!*'

"*Wednesday morning.*—Pain left me after the above was put down, and then it was thrown aside; but returned this morning at four o'clock, and drove me from the bed to begin again. But with nothing new. 'It is well'—God is more *holy* than I, and will burn up the dross. He is more *faithful*, and does not forget his promise to purify the sons of Levi, that they may present a pure offering, and then be offered up themselves!"

I proceed to the year 1800, when Mr Cecil was requested by Samuel Thornton, Esq., to take the livings of Chobham and Bisley, which his father, the ever-memorable John Thornton, Esq., had bought, and had left in the hands of trustees. Mr Cecil, though duly sensible of the favour, yet could not be prevailed on to think of accepting these livings; and was so fully determined against it that he returned several refusals in answer to pressing requests by letter that he would accept them. He was also informed by Mr Thornton, that it was his father's intention that the unbeneficed trustees (of whom Mr C. was one) were to have the first offer; and he repeated his wishes, with many friendly arguments—particularly the danger, in Mr Cecil's state of health, of his becoming incapable of going on at St John's without some relief from that arduous post. Mr C. continued, however, to retain his objections; but an old friend hinted to him that he might be resisting a call in Providence. To this intimation he listened, and consented to refer the business

to the trustees and a few select friends, who should meet for the purpose of determining the question. They accordingly met together, and were unanimous in resolving it to be the duty of a man in Mr Cecil's circumstances, family, and health, to accept the livings, and serve them in the summer.

But, in going to these livings, he went rather to labour than to rest. He forgot his broken state of constitution, when he set up in the church two extra lectures—one on the Sabbath evening, and the other on a week-day. During the first years he principally preached them himself, and with great success. To conciliate one of his parishes, he left the tithes to be fixed by three neighbouring farmers; and used every other means to gain the affection of his parishioners. There also he sought not *theirs*, but *them;* and when his son remonstrated with him on the occasion, he replied, "If by taking one guinea more I should excite prejudices in a single mind against my message, I should defeat my great project in coming to this place."

Mr Cecil found these parishes, like others where the light of truth has scarcely dawned, sunk in the depths of ignorance and immorality—very few hearers in the church, while many were making the Sabbath a day of sport and amusement. He found that there also, as in other places whither he had been led by Providence, he had to begin at the very foundation, under the most discouraging circumstances, as will appear from the impression made on his mind, on his first going among them. He says, "When I first came to Chobham, as I was sitting in the vestry, on hearing the noise and uproar of the boys, and the people in the

gallery talking aloud to each other, I burst into tears; and felt with the prophet when he said—'Can these dry bones live?'" But "the fields were white unto the harvest:" he did not labour in vain among this people: a large and attentive congregation was collected, and many "saw the day of the Son of Man, and were glad:" some of these are already entered into rest, where both "he that sowed and those who reaped now rejoice together."

There being no house to either of the livings, except a ruin inhabited by a labourer, nor any that could be engaged for Mr Cecil's residence, he spent the first few summers in part of a house since purchased by the Rev. Mr Jerram. After this, a very generous friend, Thomas Bainbridge, Esq., of Guildford Street, purchased eleven acres of ground, and built on it for Mr C. a convenient house, which he let at a low rent. Mr C. spent a few months in it, while it was unfinished, in the summer of 1807, but did not live to see it after it was completed.

I cannot pass from this subject without remarking, not only this instance of Mr B.'s kindness in burdening himself with this undertaking, which he did with a most disinterested, liberal, and friendly desire of relieving Mr C. from fatigue, care, and anxiety; but also his marked regard in other instances, which has been uniformly that of a faithful friend. When Mr C. was laid aside in the year 1808, Mr B. was one of the two friends who proposed a private subscription, intended, as before observed, as a resource when the rent from the lease of St John's should fail, which had then but about ten years to run. Mr B. subscribed largely himself, and in every way proved himself no common friend.

Nor did Mr B.'s kindness end here. During the

period when Mr Cecil's illness necessitated our absence from town for nine months, his home was the asylum of our son Israel, wherein he received the most kind and friendly attentions, both from Mr and Mrs B. Before we removed from Clifton, our dear child was seized with a fatal disease, which confined him to his bed seven weeks, in the most extreme suffering. Through this time of extremity and danger, no passive care, no expense, no labour was spared. Some young friends assiduously attended him, night and day, to his last hour. Mrs B. with the affection of a mother and with unexampled kindness, watched by his bed: in a word, our son found back a mother and a father who were willing and able to render the dear sufferer for beyond what his own father's house could have rendered him.

Though his father arrived in town while our son was still living, and only a week or two separated them, yet the distressing illness of such rendered their seeing each other again in this world impossible. Their next meeting was reserved for a day unmixed with such calamity! There was reason to hope from many favourable evidences, that the God of his father had begun a gracious work in his heart some time previous to his illness; and which, I trust, was carried on in his sick chamber, till he was fully prepared, by sovereign grace, for an inheritance in the heavenly Jerusalem, among "the spirits of just men made perfect," and for a joyful reunion with that father who was so soon to follow him—whom he so tenderly loved and so highly revered; and of whom he wrote in a manner so pathetic and affectionate, in a letter to a friend while his beloved father was at Bath, that I must be allowed to transcribe a part of his letter:—

"Chobham, 1808.

"I assure you, I feel, notwithstanding the kindness and number of my friends, a very unaccountable depression of spirits, or rather, the mind revolving on its own observations and views of the various changes I am now witnessing, with those also that are passed. In all my companions—no father! In all my conversations—none like him! In all my doubts—no oracle like him! In all my fears and anxieties—no refuge like his generosity! I feel his loss, though surrounded with the prodigality of liberality and kindness."

I return to the sad period of 1807, when Mr C. had a slight paralytic affection, from which he recovered sufficiently to resume his ministerial labours. At this period, in answer to a letter from a friend, inquiring after his health, he says, "I have been, indeed, much indisposed: and even now find sitting upright rather difficult: therefore, as proud men must be brought down, I must call my son to conclude this"—"We are all under a general dispensation, and this dispensation is sometimes so contrary to the feelings of nature, that we are apt to resist and say, 'Why am I thus?' I find it easy to tell the people from the pulpit how to act in such cases, and particularly Christians; but things are stronger than we are, and I find it very difficult to act myself. People say, and physicians too, that my preaching three times a-day through the hot weather at St John's was the cause of my present infirmity—a state in which I have not only seemed to lose my faculties, but, at one time, was unable to speak at all. I dare say they are right; but I have an interior feeling, which,

while I hear people talking [illegible] of the sermon, makes me smile, and say within myself, 'Poor [illegible], you know nothing of the matter. God is [illegible] and he is teaching me a lesson which I cannot learn from books.'"

In February 1808, another paralytic stroke took place, which deprived him of the use of his right side and totally disabled him for further exertions in [illegible]. Electricity was ordered and administered with great kindness and attention; but proving ineffectual, he was then ordered to Bath. The expense of such a journey was being within his own power, it was thought readily and cheerfully submitted to, and he set out on the undertaking, so that he was relieved from anxiety in this respect, and from difficulty, so that the kindness and liberality of friends could relieve him. In full relief, however, was on its way, and he was now hastening when the sickness and sorrows of a worn-out traveler were to be exchanged for a "eternal weight of glory," in that state where the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

After having tried the Bath waters for several months, and receiving no benefit, he was ordered to try change of air. Here, again, he answers the end of Providence. He often used to say—"I set out with nothing but dependence on God, resolving to do his work, and leave all the rest to him. I know that he will take care and provide for me." This was his habitual sentiment. Nor was his faith vain; for, as extremity arose, some gracious providence was prepared to meet his necessities. Of this the following is a very striking instance:—

Isaac Cooke, Esq. of Clifton, near Bristol, a gentleman whom Mr Cecil had never seen, but who had

heard him preach (being occasionally in town), who was neither an old friend, nor one of his congregation, nor even a neighbour, except in the sense of our Lord —Luke x.—this was the friend by whom his way was graciously directed to Clifton, and who urged, by letter, his acceptance of a ready furnished house there, for any length of time. This generous offer he thankfully accepted, and occupied the house for nearly six months. Here he found every provision for all his wants, and every possible administration to his comfort; and was, together with this, amply supplied with the means for meeting those various demands of sickness, which it was impossible even for the kindest eye of friendship to anticipate.

On his first going to Clifton, in Sept. 1808, he derived considerable benefit from the change of air; but toward the latter part of the time, his disease began to increase, and he became anxious to return home. He was advised by his medical friends to give the Bath waters a second trial in his way to town; but receiving no benefit from them, we shortly proceeded on our journey—a journey full of anxiety and apprehension—as his weakness was at that time so extreme, that travelling appeared almost impossible: and would have been entirely so, but for the exertions of his friend, who obtained for him an easy coach, with an inside arrangement by which Mr C. was enabled to travel in a reclining position. Thus accommodated, he performed the journey in five days, without injury, and arrived in town in March 1809.

On Mr Cecil's arrival at his house in Little James Street, in the spring of 1809, with his nerves shattered and his state of health broken, the sudden heat of the

weather, together with the closeness and noise of the town, greatly increased his sufferings, and he became extremely anxious to remove from its tumult and distraction. He was at this time in a state which can be little apprehended, even by invalids themselves, much less by those in health and vigour. It was, however, a state to him, and a season to me, replete with difficulties, which seemed increasing on all sides. His anxiety to leave town became stronger daily, but no possible way seemed open, and I could only, like Hagar, bewail miseries I could neither remove nor mitigate; nor, like her, could I apprehend the relief that was so near at hand. These difficulties were removed by our friend, Charles Offley, Esq., then of Great Ormond Street. Mrs O., on seeing Mr C., and observing the distressing state of his nerves, was indefatigable in seeking for a suitable retreat for him; but not meeting with a situation near town, after many researches, she determined to go to Tunbridge Wells, conceiving that both the air and waters might be advantageous to Mr C. She took a house there for the season, on a very open spot, at Mr O.'s expense; and Mr C. went to it accordingly in May 1809; but as we fatally know, did not derive the hoped-for benefit from these very favourable circumstances.

In the month of Oct. 1809, he came back to town for the winter; but on the return of spring, he found all his sufferings return with it; and again he anxiously desired to remove into the country. This brings my history back to his Clifton friend, of whom I observed, that after conveying Mr C. to town, he did not resign him there. At Tunbridge his favours followed him; and after Mr Cecil's return from thence to town in

Oct. 1809, and when the lease of his chapel was disposed of, and his income necessarily straitened, this friend engaged to supply him with an annual remittance during his life, which was devoted to his benefit, as the means of procuring a house for him through the summer months, and by which, together with a sum collected by Mr C.'s nephew in his family circle for the same purpose, these expenses were supplied.

With this provision, we proceeded to take a house at Bellevue, Hampstead, in a quiet and airy situation. Thither we removed in April 1810; and here Mr Cecil's general health and spirits were much benefited. But it pleased God to remove him from thence to a house more congenial to the desires of his soul, "eternal in the heavens." By a fit of apoplexy his spirit was released from the body of death, August 15, 1810,—a bereavement to his family, to the church, and to the world, irreparable; an affliction calling for silent submission to Divine Wisdom, and only mitigated by the assurance of his being from thenceforth for "ever with the Lord."

I should be more strictly fulfilling the desire of the deceased on the subject of Mr Cooke's kindness to him, were I to enter more into the detail; and in tracing this instance of divine care, I wished to have had the liberty of inserting a few extracts from his friendly letters, which bear the best evidence on this subject. But in requesting permission to do this, I received a positive refusal, with a prohibition to mention either his name or any of the favours which he had rendered. I am, however, compelled, either to do violence to his desire and determination to remain concealed, or to violate an injunction repeatedly enforced by Mr C. to bear a

testimony for him, when he was no longer able to express it himself, to the kindness of that brother who was thus raised up to meet this day of his adversity—one whose administrations resembled those of an affectionate son to a beloved father. Expressions of regard and concern like these, so uncommon, so unexpected, could not fail of fixing a deep, lasting, and grateful impression on Mr Cecil's mind, nor of aiding my imagination in the vivid conception, that I still hear him, in words similar to these of the apostle—"The Lord give mercy unto his household, for he oft refreshed me, sought me out, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find grace in that day. In how many things he ministered to me, thou knowest right well." I feel bound, however, to avoid entering into particulars, knowing the pain that even this slight glance will occasion to one whom gratitude would ever lead me to regard with the strictest delicacy. But not to speak on the subject at all, would be to violate Mr Cecil's dying command, and to hide from the eye of the world another special instance of God's gracious care, in supplying the wants of his servants in all ages; at one period by the wing of a raven, at another by a widow woman, and at another by the extraordinary kindness of a friend.

But "the time drew nigh when Israel must die." Death was a subject familiar to the beloved character of whom I write. He had "fought the good fight, kept the faith, and was ready to be offered up." He gradually declined, protesting his unshaken confidence in the truths which he had so long preached, and endeavoured to impress on his family and others. At length he became so weak and nervous that he spoke but little, and was

frequently, through the prevalence of disease, a painful subject of depression.

It is to be lamented, that in Mr Cecil's last illness, we were deprived of that rich vein of reflections with which we were privileged during his confinement in the year 1798, and which the nature of his fatal disease now impeded. In 1798, though he was torn with pain, yet his mind retained its full vigour; but in his last illness his mind became emaciated as well as his body, and it need not be remarked that a paralysis often makes as fatal an attack on the mind as on the body; in all cases it weakens, and frequently deranges.*

* The view of Mr Cecil's final disease, and the effects of it on his mind, are so justly stated by the Rev. Daniel Wilson (now Bishop of Calcutta), in the second of the two sermons which he preached at St John's on occasion of Mr Cecil's death, that, with his permission, I here insert it:—

"During the whole period of his last illness, a space of nearly three years, the state of his mind fluctuated with his malady. Every one who has had opportunites of observing the operation of palsy, knows that, without destroying, or, properly speaking, perverting the reasoning powers, it agitates and enervates them. Every object is presented through a discoloured medium. False premises are assumed; and the mind is sometimes more than usually expert in drawing inferences accordingly. In a word, the whole system is deranged and shattered. An excessive care and irritation and despondency are produced, under the impression of which the sufferer acts every moment, without being at all aware of the cause. His morbid anxiety is, besides, fixed on some inconsiderable or ideal matter, which he magnifies and distorts; whilst he remains incapable of attending to concerns of superior moment; and any attempts to rectify his misapprehensions quicken the irritation, and increase the effects of the disorder.

"Under this peculiar visitation it pleased God that our late venerable father should labour. The energy, and decision, and grandeur of his natural powers, therefore, gradually gave way, and a morbid feebleness succeeded. Yet even in this afflicting state, with his body on one side almost lifeless, his organs of speech im-

Nevertheless, through all obstacles, his mind, like the compass, tended ever and only to his one grand object—his interest in his Saviour, and the infinite

paired, and his judgment weakened, the spiritual dispositions of his heart displayed themselves in a very remarkable manner. He appeared great in the ruins of nature; and his eminently religious character manifested itself, to the honour of divine grace, in a manner which surprised all who were acquainted with the ordinary effects of paralytic complaints. The springs of hope were, of course, impeded; but the habit of grace, which had been forming in his mind for thirty or forty years, shone through the cloud. At such a period there was no room for fresh acquisitions. The real character of the man could only appear, when disease allowed it to appear at all, according to the grand leading habits of his life. If his habits had been ambitious, or sensual, or covetous, or worldly, these tendencies, if any, would have displayed themselves; but as his soul had been long established in grace, and spiritual religion had been incorporated with all his trains of sentiment and affection, and had become like a second nature, the holy dispositions of his heart acted with remarkable constancy under all the variations of his illness, so that one of his oldest friends observed to me, that if he had to choose the portion of his life since he first knew him, in which the evidences of a state of salvation were most decisive, he should, without a moment's hesitation, select the period of his last distressing malady.

"Throughout his illness his whole mind, instead of being fixed on some mean and insignificant concern, was riveted on spiritual objects. Every other topic was so uninteresting to him, and even burdensome, that he could with reluctance allow it to be introduced. The value of his soul, the emptiness of the world, the nearness and solemnity of death, were ever on his lips. He spent his whole time in reading the Scripture, and one or two old divines, particularly Archbishop Leighton. All he said and did was as a man on the brink of an eternal state.

"His humility, also, evidently ripened as he approached his end. He was willing to receive advice from every quarter. He listened with anxiety to any hint that was offered him. His view of his own misery and helplessness as a sinner, and of the necessity of being entirely indebted to divine grace, and being saved as the greatest monument of its efficacy, was continually on the increase.

"His simplicity and fervour in speaking of the Saviour were also

concerns of eternity; from this his attention could not be diverted by any subject of a temporal nature, save *one only*, and *that* with subordination and submission.

very remarkable. As he drew nearer to death, his one topic was—Jesus Christ. All his anxiety and care were centred in this grand point. His apprehensions of the work and glory of Christ, of the extent and suitableness of his salvation, and of the unspeakable importance of being spiritually united to him, were more distinct and simple, if possible, than at any period of his life. He spake of him to his family, with the feeling, and interest, and seriousness of the aged and dying believer.

"His faith also never failed. I have heard him, with faltering and feeble lips, speak of the great foundations of Christianity with the fullest confidence. He said he never saw so clearly the truth of the doctrines which he had been preaching as since his illness. His view of the certainty and excellency of God's promises in Christ was unshaken.

"The interest, likewise, which he took in the success of the gospel was prominent, when his disease at all remitted. His own people lay near his heart; and, when a providence had occurred which he hoped would promote their benefit, he expressed himself with old Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.'

"The principal effect of his distemper was in throwing a cloud over his comfort; yet, in producing this, the spiritual tendency of his mind appeared. His diseased depression operated indeed, but it was in leading him to set a high standard of holiness, to bring together elevated marks of regeneration, and to require decisive evidences of a spirit of faith and adoption. The acuteness of his judgment then argued so strongly from these false premises, that he necessarily excluded himself almost entirely from the consolation of hope. If I may be allowed a theological term, the objective acts of faith—those that related to the grand objects proposed in the Scriptures on the testimony of God, such as the work of redemption, the person of Christ, and the virtue of his blood—remained the same; nay, were ripened and strengthened as his dissolution approached. But the subjective acts of faith—those which respected his own interest in these blessings, and which gave life to the exercises of hope—rose and sunk with his disease. He was precisely like a man oppressed by a heavy weight: as the load was lightened, he began to move and exert himself in his natural manner; when the burden was increased, he sunk down again under the oppression.

Sometimes, when speaking of his continual need of unabating administration, and the consequent demands upon my health and spirits, he would say, looking at

"About a year before his death, when his powers of mind had for a long time been debilitated, but still retained some remnants of their former vigour, his religious feelings were at times truly desirable. His intellectual powers were indeed too far weakened for joy; but there was a resignation, a tranquillity, a ripeness of grace, a calm and holy repose on the bosom of the Saviour, that quite alarmed, if I may so speak, his anxious family, under the impression that there appeared nothing left for grace to do, and that he would soon be removed from them, 'as a shock of corn cometh in its season.' Even when his disease had made still further progress, as often as the slightest alleviation was afforded him, his judgment became more distinct, his morbid depression lessened, and he was moderately composed. It was only a few weeks before his dissolution that such an interval was vouchsafed to him. He then spake with great feeling from the Scriptures, in family worship, for about half an hour, and dwelt on the love, and grace, and power of Christ with particular composure of mind. I had the happiness of visiting him at this season. He was so much relieved from his disease, as to enter with me on general topics relating to religion, and to give me some excellent directions as to my conduct as a minister. In reply to various questions which I put to him, he spoke to me to the following purport: 'I know myself to be a wretched, worthless sinner' (the seriousness and feeling with which he spoke I shall never forget), 'having nothing in myself but poverty and sin. I know Jesus Christ to be a glorious and almighty Saviour. I see the full efficacy of his atonement and grace; and I cast myself entirely on him, and wait at his footstool. I am aware that my diseased and broken mind makes me incapable of receiving consolation; but I submit myself wholly to the merciful and wise dispensations of God.'

"One or two other interesting testimonies of the spiritual and devoted state of his heart may be here mentioned. A short time before his decease, he requested one of his family to write down for him in a book the following sentence: 'None but Christ, none but Christ, said Lambert dying at a stake: the same, in dying circumstances, with his whole heart, saith Richard Cecil.' The name was signed by himself, with his left hand, in a manner hardly legible through infirmity."

me with tender affection, "I earnestly wish that I could reward your labours by leaving you an independency"—but would add, with a firm faith on divine providence, "I doubt not but that you and your children will be provided for after my decease; I can only look to that God who has so graciously taken care of, and provided for me, who entered upon the world without any possessions."

His evangelical views became more and more vivid latterly. He read such authors only as treated these views most simply. Archbishop Leighton's Sermons afforded him a continual source of satisfaction. He read them perpetually; and particularly his sermon on 1 Cor. v. 30; that on Cant. i. 3; and two on Rom. viii. 33, 34. He said to me and others, that he earnestly wished all his own writings had been of this description; and that his Address, added to the Life of Mr Newton, could be exchanged for an abridgment of the sermon on 1 Cor. v. 30, as infinitely more interesting.

It cannot be supposed that I mention this as though anything in that Address were defective (for whoever can read that Address without emotion or without a tear, has a proof in his own breast that he has little experience, or a hard heart), but rather to show his humility; and also how he esteemed everything as dross compared with that one object, which led him so often to repeat, with the martyr Lambert, "None but Christ! None but Christ!" While his fatal malady had much impaired his natural powers, and contracted his former grasp of thought, he retained, like the blessed Apostle John, one faculty in perfection, that of an adherence of heart to the bosom of his Sa-

viour, with that true contrition of spirit described in that Address, and which the High and Lofty One regards with delight in his children.

Mr Cecil's disease tended to produce frequent irritation: the impulse was sudden and irresistible; but these irritations were so insignificant in their consequences, that the chief pain produced by them arose from observing his own poignant feelings on such occasions. He would recur, in a moment, to his principles; and would express in the strongest terms his detestation and self-abasement; entreating forgiveness, forbearance, and patience. Indeed, it excited exquisite pain, and often surprise, in the minds of those around, to remark, that the slightest instances of these irritations never failed to produce the strongest expressions of humiliation; he continually brought to my recollection the words of the prophet, "Thou hast laid thy body as the ground; and as the street, to them that went over."

One evening, after reading his Bible for some hours, he said to me, "I derive my whole consolation from meditating on the Godhead and character of Jesus, in whom I place all my hope! 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.'"

His habit of reading remained with him to his last hours. He was wholly engaged in reading the choicest parts of such authors as Leighton, Trail, Boston, and Gurnall. This last he was reading at the moment when the apoplectic seizure took place. "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing!" —Luke xii. 43. He read Gurnall's "Christian Ar-

mour" without intermission, during the last four days of his life; and expressed his having been much helped and benefited by that writer.

Notwithstanding the deep inroad which disease had made on his intellectual powers, whereby his enjoyment was eclipsed and his comfort overshadowed, yet I had the satisfaction of observing (as had some of those friends who had access to him), that through all impediments his real ripening for glory was manifest, as he travelled nearer and nearer to the grave, in his child-like simplicity, his humility, self-abasement, and increasing estimation of his adorable Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Though, as I have before remarked, his mind was often bowed down by the fatal paralysis which put an end to his labours, yet he retained to the last something of his ministerial spirit; and, in a lucid moment, often spoke of preaching again, saying, "Should it please God ever to raise me up to preach again, *Christ* would be my only subject!" On this Rock of Ages he had, by divine help, built for eternity,—a building which the winds of adversity could not shake. His place of defence and his treasure was on high; and where his treasure was, there was his heart also; and though called to wade through a dark dispensation, yet his long and gracious habit (which never left him) of turning to his heavenly Father, remained as the evening-time light, till he was admitted to a mansion where there is night no more.

In conversation with a friend and minister, he said, "In your preaching hold up Christ. This should be your great object and aim in your sermons. Some have objected that I have preached too much on faith;

were I to preach again, they would hear much of it."

ıt he had finished his public course, and was no able to resume his ministry. He had another, a very different lesson to learn in the school of st. After having exhibited the Saviour with fer- and faithfulness in public, he was taken aside a sick chamber, there to be more emphatically ıt what he had declared to others, that none but st could meet the wants of a dying sinner. From chamber, and this dispensation, he did indeed ch again, and aloud, to the heart, on that im- ınt warning of our Lord, "Be ye also ready." did his faith fail him here, but remained firm while y thing else was shaken; nor did I ever, at any , hear him declare his faith with more steadfastness in the days of his affliction. It was a ground of h comfort to me to observe, that at no period dur- his visitation, even when disease made the deepest ıd on his health and faculties, and Satan's tempta- ı harassed his enfeebled mind, did his object vary, remained one and the same with that in the days of ıealth, "Christ crucified for the chief of sinners!" ıe only point worthy the contemplation of a mortal ening into the eternal world.

he total loss of the use of his right hand prevented putting on paper many things interesting and highly uctive. This he often lamented; while the agita- of his nerves rendered it impracticable to be done thers. I have, with mournful pleasure, discovered ages in his Bible, evidently marked *since* his dis- d state, to which he has, with a trembling left hand, his initials, "R. C., Amen!"—testifying his hope

and confidence in the all-sufficiency and atoning merit of his Saviour.—1 Cor. xvi. 22; Rev. v. 12.

A short time before his decease, on hearing the second chapter of Jonah read at family worship, he was much impressed by it, and gathered from it great consolation. He spoke on it for a considerable time, and the next day desired me to read the book of Jonah through to him; after which he made many beautiful observations, and remarked how it extended to every possible case, and afforded unlimited hope, and furnished a perfect antidote to despondency—with many other observations, which have escaped my memory. I must ever regret that the nature of my employment in attending him, prevented the possibility of my securing on paper many of his valuable conversations, at those intervals when a ray of divine consolation broke through the cloudy and dark day of disease.

It has been before remarked that Mr Cecil's views became more and more simply evangelical, particularly during the days of his affliction. In this school he had long been taught; high lessons were here put before him; and, in his own words, in his "Visit to the House of Mourning," I may say of him, "The great Husbandman will not fail to adopt the sharpest means for the improvement of his choicest plants;" and again, from his favourite Leighton, "The Church is God's jewellery—his working-house, where his jewels are polished for his palace; and those he especially esteems and means to make most resplendent, he hath oftenest his tools upon them." Thus the ever-dear departed passed through many tribulations; and, as the apostle speaks, "filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh, for his body's sake,

REMAINS.

IN THE

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND [illegible]

The direct cause of a Christian's spiritual life is union with Christ. All attention to the mere circumstantials of religion has a tendency to draw the soul away from this union. Few men except ministers are called to the nature of their station to enter much into these circumstantials: such, for instance, as the evidences of the truth of religion. Ministers feel the deadening effect of any considerable or continued attention to externals; much more must private Christians. The head may be strengthened, all the heart is starved. Some private Christians, however, may be called on by the nature of those circles in which they move, to be qualified to meet and refute the objections which may be urged against religion. Such men, as well as ministers, while they are furnishing themselves for this purpose, must acquiesce in the work which God appoints for them, with prayer and watchfulness. If they cannot always live and abide close to the ark, and the

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:STIAN LIFE AND CONFLICT.

:ect cause of a Christian's spiritual life is union hrist. All attention to the mere circumstantials ;ion has a tendency to draw the soul away from ion. Few men except ministers are called, by :ure of their station, to enter much into these ;tantials: such, for instance, as the evidences of th of religion. Ministers feel this deadening f any considerable or continued attention to ex- ; much more must private Christians. The ıay be strengthened till the heart is starved. ›rivate Christians, however, may be called on, nature of those circles in which they move, to lified to meet and refute the objections which urged against religion. Such men, as well as rs, while they are furnishing themselves for this :, must acquiesce in the work which God ap- 'or them, with prayer and watchfulness. If they always live and abide close to the ark, and the

pot of manna, and the cherubim, and the mercy-seat; yet they are drawing the water and gathering the wood necessary for the service of the camp. But let their hearts still turn toward the place where the Glory resideth.

The Christian's fellowship with God is rather a habit than a rapture. He is a pilgrim, who has the habit of looking forward to the light before him; he has the habit of not looking back; he has the habit of walking steadily in the way, whatever be the weather, and whatever the road. These are his habits; and the Lord of the way is his guide, protector, friend, and felicity.

As the Christian's exigencies arise, he has a spiritual habit of turning to God, and saying, with the Church, "'Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon?' I have tried to find rest elsewhere. I have fled to shelters which held out great promise of repose, but I have now long since learned to turn unto Thee. 'Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon?'"

The Christian will look back throughout eternity, with interest and delight, on the steps and means of his conversion. "My father told me this! My mother told me that! Such an event was sanctified to me! In such a place, God visited my soul!" These recollections will never grow dull and wearisome.

A volume might be written on the various methods which God has taken, in providence, to lead men first to think of Him.

The history of a man's own life is, to himself, the most interesting history in the world, next to that of the Scriptures. Every man is an original and solitary character. None can either understand or feel the book of his own life like himself. The lives of other men are to him dry and vapid when set beside his own. He enters very little into the spirit of the Old Testament, who does not see God calling on him to turn over the pages of this history, when he says to the Jew, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years." He sees God teaching the Jew to look at the records of his deliverance from the Red Sea, of the manna showered down on him from heaven, and of the Amalekites put to flight before him. There are such grand events in the life and experience of every Christian. It may be well for him to review them often. I have, in some cases, vowed before God to appropriate yearly remembrances of some of the signal turns of my life. Having made the vow, I hold it as obligatory; but I would advise others to greater circumspection, as they may bring a galling yoke on themselves, which God designed not to put on them.

True grace is a growing principle. The Christian grows in discernment: a child may play with a serpent, but the man gets as far from it as he can; a child may taste poison, but the man will not suffer a speck of

poison near him. He grows in humility: the blade shoots up boldly, and the young ear keeps erect with confidence; but the full corn in the ear inclines itself toward the earth, not because it is feebler, but because it is matured. He grows in strength: the new wine ferments and frets; but the old wine acquires a body and a firmness.

Tenderness of conscience is always to be distinguished from scrupulousness. The conscience cannot be kept too sensible and tender; but scrupulousness arises from bodily or mental infirmity, and discovers itself in a multitude of ridiculous, and superstitious, and painful feelings.

The head is dull in discerning the value of God's expedients; and the heart cold, sluggish, and reluctant in submitting to them. But the head is lively in the invention of its own expedients; and the heart eager and sanguine in the pursuit of them. No wonder, then, that God subjects both the head and the heart to a course of continual correction.

Every man will have his own criterion in forming his judgment of others. I depend very much on the effect of affliction. I consider how a man comes out of the furnace: gold will lie for a month in the furnace without losing a grain. And, while under trial, a child has a habit of turning to his father; he is not like a penitent, who has been whipped into this

state; it is natural to him. It is dark, and the child has no whither to run but to his father.

Defilement is inseparable from the world. A man can no where rest his foot on it without sinking. A strong principle of assimilation combines the world and the heart together. There are, especially, certain occasions when the current hurries a man away, and he has lost the religious government of himself. When the pilot finds, on making the port of Messina, that the ship will not obey the helm, he knows that she is got within the influence of that attraction which will bury her in the whirlpool. We are to avoid the danger, rather than to oppose it. This is a great doctrine of Scripture. An active force against the world is not so much inculcated as a retreating, declining spirit. "Keep thyself unspotted from the world."

There are seasons when a Christian's distinguishing character is hidden from man. A Christian merchant on 'Change is not called to show any difference in his mere exterior carriage from another merchant; he gives a reasonable answer if he is asked a question. He does not fanatically intrude religion into every sentence he utters; he does not suppose his religion to be inconsistent with the common interchange of civilities. He is affable and courteous; he can ask the news of the day, and take up any public topic of conversation. But is he, therefore, not different from other men? He is like another merchant in the mere exterior circumstance, which is least in God's regard; but in his taste—his

views—his science—his hopes—his happiness, he is as different from those around him as light is from darkness! He "waits for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," who never passes perhaps through the thoughts of those he talks with, but to be neglected and despised!

The Christian is called to be like Abraham in conduct, like Paul in labours, and like John in spirit. Though, as a man of faith, he goes forth not knowing whither, and his principle is hidden from the world, yet he will oblige the world to acknowledge: "His views, it is true, we do not understand—his principles and general conduct are a mystery to us; but a more upright, noble, generous, disinterested, peaceable, and benevolent man we know not where to find." The world may even count him a madman, and false brethren may vilify his character and calumniate his motives; yet he will bear down evil by repaying good, and will silence his enemies by the abundance of his labours. He may be shut out from the world—cast into prison—banished into obscurity—no eye to observe him, no hand to help him; but it is enough for him if his Saviour will speak to him and smile on him!

Christians are too little aware what their religion requires from them, with regard to their wishes. When we wish things to be otherwise than they are, we lose sight of the great practical parts of the life of godliness. We wish, and wish, when, if we have done all that lies on us, we should fall quietly into the hands of God. Such

wishing cuts the very sinews of our privileges and consolations. You are leaving me for a time, and you say you wish you could leave me better, or leave me with some assistance; but if it is right for you to go, it is right for me to meet what lies in me, without a wish that I had less to meet, or were better able to meet it.

I could write down twenty cases, wherein I wished God had done otherwise than he did; but which I now see, had I had my own will, would have led to extensive mischief. The life of a Christian is a life of paradoxes. He must lay hold on God; he must follow hard after him: he must determine not to let him go. And yet he must learn to let God alone. Quietness before God is one of the most difficult of all Christian graces—to sit where he places us, to be what he would have us be, and this as long as he pleases. We are like a player at bowls, if he has given his bowl too little bias, he cries, "Flee;" if he has given it too much, he cries, "Rub;" you see him lifting his leg, and bending his body, in conformity to the motion he would impart to the bowl. Thus I have felt with regard to my dispensations: I would urge them or restrain them; I would assimilate them to the habit of my mind. But I have smarted for this under severe visitations. It may seem a harsh, but it is a wise and gracious dispensation toward a man, when, the instant he stretches out his hand to order his affairs, God forces him to withdraw it. Concerning what is morally good or evil, we are sufficiently informed for our direction, but concerning what is naturally good or evil, we are ignorant

itself. Restlessness and self-will are opposed to our duty in these cases.

Schooling the heart is the grand means of personal religion. To bring motives under faithful examination, is a high state of religious character; with regard to the depravity of the heart, we live daily in the disbelief of our own creed. We indulge thoughts and feelings which are founded upon the presumption that all around us are imperfect and corrupted, but that we are exempted. The self-will, and ambition, and passion of public characters in the religious world, all arise from this sort of practical infidelity. And, though its effects are so manifest in these men, because they are leaders of parties, and are set upon a pinnacle so that all who are without the influence of their vortex can see them, yet every man's own breast has an infallible, dogmatising, excommunicating, and anathematising spirit working within.

Acting from the occasion, without recollection and inquiry, is the death of personal religion. It will not suffice merely to retire to the study or the closet. The mind is sometimes, in private, most ardently pursuing its particular object; and as it then acts from the occasion, nothing is further from it than recollectedness. I have, for weeks together, in pursuit of some scheme, acted so entirely from the occasion, that, when I have at length called myself to account, I have seemed like one awaked from a dream. "Am I the man who could think and speak so and so? Am I the man who could feel such a disposition, or discover such conduct?" The fascination and enchantment of the occasion is

vanished, and I stand like David in similar circumstances before Nathan. Such cases in experience are, in truth, a moral intoxication, and the man is only then sober when he begins to school his heart.

The servant of God has not only natural sensibilities, by which he feels, in common with other men, the sorrows of life, but he has moral sensibilities, which are peculiar to his character. When David was driven from his kingdom, he not only felt depressed as an exile and wanderer, but he would recollect his own sin as punished in the affliction. Eli had not only to suffer the pangs of a father in the loss of his sons, but he would recall, with bitterness of spirit, his own mismanagement in bringing up these sons. St Paul had not only to endure the thorn in the flesh, but he would feel that he carried about him propensities to self-exaltation, which rendered that thorn necessary and salutary.

Dangerous predicaments are the brinks of temptation. A man often gives evidence to others that he is giddy, though he is not aware of it, perhaps, himself. Whoever has been in danger himself, will guess very shrewdly concerning the dangerous state of such a man.

A haughty spirit is a symptom of extreme danger:—"A haughty spirit goeth before a fall."

Presumptuous carelessness indicates danger. "Who fears?" This is to be feared, that you feel no cause of fear. Such was Peter's state: "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I."

Venturing on the borders of danger is much akin to

this. A man goes on pretty well till he ventures within the atmosphere of danger; but the atmosphere of danger infatuates him. The ship is got within the influence of the vortex, and will not obey the helm. David was sitting in this atmosphere on the house-top, and was ensnared and fell.

An accession of wealth is a dangerous predicament for a man. At first he is stunned, if the accession be sudden; he is very humble and very grateful. Then he begins to speak a little louder, people think him more sensible, and soon he thinks himself so.

A man is in imminent danger when, in suspected circumstances, he is disposed to equivocate, as Abraham did with Pharaoh, and Isaac with Abimelech.

Stupidity of conscience under chastisement,—an advancement to power, when a man begins to relish such power,—popularity,—self-indulgence,—a disposition to gad about, like Dinah: all these are symptoms of spiritual danger.

A change of circumstances in our condition of life is a critical period. No man who has not passed through such a change, can form any adequate notion of its effects upon the mind. When money comes into the pocket of a poor man in small sums, it goes out as it came in, and more follows it in the same way; and, with a certain freedom and indifference, it is applied to its proper uses; but when he begins to receive round sums, that may yield him an interest, and when this interest comes to be added to his principal, and the sweets of augmentation to creep over him, it is quite a new world to him. In a rise of circumstances, too, the

man becomes, in his own opinion, a wiser man, a greater man, and pride of station crosses him in his way. Nor is the contrary change less dangerous. Poverty has its trials. That is a fine trait in the Pilgrim's Progress that Christian stumbled in going down the hill into the valley of humiliation.

A sound head, a simple heart, and a spirit dependent on Christ, will suffice to conduct us in every variety of circumstances.

I cannot look through my past life without trembling. A variation in my circumstances has been attended with dangers and difficulties, little of which I saw at the time compared with what reflection has since shown me, but which in the review of them make me shudder, and ought to fill me with gratitude. He who views this subject aright, will put up particular prayers against sudden attacks.

God will have the Christian thoroughly humbled and dependent. Strong minds think, perhaps, sometimes, that they can effect great things in experience by keeping themselves girt up, by the recurrence of habit, by vigorous exertion. This is their unquestionable duty. But God often strips them, lest they should grow confident. He lays them bare—he makes them feel poor, dark, impotent. He seems to say, "Strive with all your vigour, but yet I am he that worketh all in all."

There is no calling or profession, however ensnaring

in many respects to a Christian mind, provided it be not in itself simply unlawful, wherein God has not frequently raised up faithful witnesses, who have stood forth as examples to others, in like situations, of the practicability of uniting great eminence in the Christian life with the discharge of the duties of their profession, however difficult.

Fear has the most steady effect on the constitutional temperament of some Christians, to keep them in their course. A strong sense of duty fixes on the minds of others, and is the prevailing principle of conduct, without any direct reference to consequences. On minds of a stubborn, refractory, and self-willed temper, fear and duty have in general little effect; they brave fear, and a mere sense of duty is a cold and lifeless principle; but gratitude, under a strong and subduing sense of mercies, melts them into obedience.

There is a large class, who would confound nature and grace. These are chiefly women. They sit at home, nursing themselves over a fire, and then trace up the natural effects of solitude and want of air and exercise into spiritual desertion. There is more pride in this than they are aware of. They are unwilling to allow so simple and natural a cause of their feelings, and wish to find something in the thing more sublime.

There are so many things to lower a man's top-sails; he is such a dependent creature; he has to pay such court

to his stomach, his food, his sleep, his exercise, that, in truth, a hero is an idle word. Man seems formed to be a hero in suffering—not a hero in action. Men err in nothing more than in the estimate which they make of human labour. The hero of the world is the man that makes a bustle—the man that makes the road smoke under his chaise-and-four—the man that raises a dust about him—the man that manages or devastates empires! But what is the real labour of this man, compared with that of a silent sufferer? He lives on his projects. He encounters, perhaps, rough roads, incommodious inns, bad food, storms and perils, weary days and sleepless nights; but what are these! His project, his point, the thing that has laid hold on his heart, glory, a name, consequence, pleasure, wealth,—these render the man callous to the pains and efforts of the body. I have been in both states, and therefore understand them; and I know that men form this false estimate. Besides, there is something in bustle, and stir, and activity, that supports itself. At one period, I preached and read five times on a Sunday, and rode sixteen miles. But what did it cost me? Nothing! Yet most men would have looked on while I was rattling from village to village, with all the dogs barking at my heels, and would have called me a hero; whereas, if they were to look at me now, they would call me an idle, lounging fellow. "He makes a sermon on the Saturday, he gets into his study, he walks from end to end, he scribbles on a scrap of paper, he throws it away and scribbles on another; he takes snuff, he sits down, scribbles again, walks about.—" The man cannot see that here is an exhaustion of the spirit, which at night will leave me worn to the extremity

of endurance. He cannot see the numberless efforts of mind, which are crossed, and stifled, and recoil on the spirits, like the fruitless efforts of a traveller to get firm footing among the ashes on the steep sides of Mount Etna.*

Elijah appears to have been a man of what we call a great spirit; yet we never find him rising against the humiliating methods which God was sometimes pleased to take with him; whether he is to depend for his daily food on the ravens, or is to be nourished by the slender pittance of a perishing widow. Pride would choose for us such means of provision as have some appearance of our own agency in them; and stout-heartedness would lead us to refuse things if we cannot have them in our own way.

The blessed man is he who is under education in God's school, where he endures chastisement, and by chastisement is instructed. The foolish creature is bewitched sometimes with the enchantments and sorceries of life. He begins to lose the lively sense of that something which is superior to the glory of the world. His grovelling soul begins to say, "Is not this fine? Is not that charming? Is not that noble house worth a wish? Is not that equipage worth a sigh?" He must go to the Word of God to know what a thing is worth. He must be taught there to call things by their proper names. If he have lost this habit, when his heart puts the questions, he will answer them like a fool; as I have

* See the Adventurer, No. cxxvii.

done a thousand times. He will forget that God puts his children into possession of these things, as mere stewards, and that the possession of them increases their responsibility. He will sit down, and plan and scheme to obtain possession of things which he forgets are to be burnt and destroyed. But God dashes the fond scheme in pieces. He disappoints the project. And, with the chastisement he sends instruction; for he knows that the silly creature, if left to himself, would begin, like the spider whose web has been swept away, to spin it again. And then the man sees that Job is blessed, not when God gives him sons, and daughters, and flocks, and herds, and power, and honour, but when God takes all these away: not when the schemes of his carnal heart are indulged, but when they are crossed and disappointed.

A stubborn and rebellious mind in a Christian must be kept low by dark and trying dispensations. The language of God, in his providence, to such an one, is generally of this kind: "I will not wholly hide myself. I will be seen by thee. But thou shalt never meet me except in a dark night and in a storm." Ministers of such a natural spirit are often fitted for eminent usefulness by these means.

The Christian in his sufferings is often tempted to think himself forgotten. But his afflictions are the clearest proofs that he is an object, both of Satan's enmity and of God's fatherly discipline. Satan would not have man suffer a single trouble all his life long, if

he might have his way. He would give him the thing his heart is set upon; he would work in with his ambition; he would pamper his lust and his pride. But God has better things in reserve for his children; and they must be brought to desire them and seek them, and this will be through the wreck and sacrifice of all that the heart holds dear. The Christian prays for fuller manifestations of Christ's power, and glory, and love to him; but he is often not aware that this is, in truth, praying to be brought into the furnace, for in the furnace only it is that Christ can walk with his friends, and display, in their preservation and deliverance, his own almighty power. Yet, when brought thither, it is one of the worst parts of the trial that the Christian often thinks himself, for a time at least, abandoned. Job thought so; but while he looked on himself as an outcast, the Infinite Spirit and the wicked spirit were holding a dialogue on his case! He was more an object of notice and interest than the largest armies that were ever assembled, and the mightiest revolutions that ever shook the world, considered merely in their temporal interests and consequences. Let the Christian be deeply concerned, in all his trials, to honour his Master before such observers.

Affliction has a tendency, especially if long continued, to generate a kind of despondency and ill-temper; and spiritual incapacity is closely connected with pain and sickness. The spirit of prayer does not necessarily come with affliction. If this be not poured out upon the man, he will, like a wounded beast, skulk to his den and growl there.

God has marked implicitness and simplicity of faith with peculiar approbation. He has done this throughout the Scripture, and he is doing it daily in the Christian life. An unsuspecting, unquestioning, unhesitating spirit he delights to honour. He does not delight in a credulous, weak, and unstable mind; he gives us full evidence, when he calls and leads, but he expects to find in us—what he himself bestows—an open ear and a disposed heart. Though he gives us not the evidence of sense, yet he gives such evidence as will be heard by an open ear, and followed by a disposed heart: "Thomas! because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." We are witnesses what an open ear and a disposed heart will do in men of the world. If wealth is in pursuit, if a place presents itself before them, if their persons and families and affairs are the object, a whisper, a hint, a probability, a mere chance, is a sufficient ground of action. It is this very state of mind with regard to religion which God delights in and honours. He seems to put forth a hand and to say—"Put thy hand into mine. Follow all my leadings. Keep thyself attentive to every turn."

A sound heart is an excellent casuist. Men stand doubting what they shall do, while an evil heart is at the bottom. If, with St Paul, they simply did *one thing*, the way would be plain. A miser or an ambitious man knows his points; and he has such a simplicity in the pursuit of them, that you seldom find him at a loss about the steps which he should take to attain them. He has acquired a sort of instinctive habit in

his pursuit. Simplicity and rectitude would have prevented a thousand schisms in the church, which have generally risen from men having something else in plan and prospect, and not the one thing.

"What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter"—is the unvaried language of God in his providence. He will have credit every step. He will not assign reasons, because he will exercise faith.

Pride urges men to inquire into the philosophy of divine truth. They are not contented, for example, with the account which the Bible gives of the origin of evil, and its actual influence on mankind; but they would supply what God has left untold. They would explain the fitness and propriety of things. A mathematician may summon his scholars round his chair, and from self-evident principles deduce and demonstrate his conclusions; he has axioms, but concerning evil we have none. A Christian may say on this subject, as Sir Christopher Wren did concerning the roof of King's College Chapel—"Show me how to fix the first stone, and I will finish the building." "Explain the origin of evil, and I will explain every other difficulty respecting evil." We are placed in a disposition and constitution of things under a righteous governor. If we will not rest satisfied with this, something is wrong in our state of mind. It is a solid satisfaction to every man who has been seduced into foolish inquiries, that it is utterly impossible to advance one inch by them. He must come back to rest in God's appointment; he must

come back to sit patiently, meekly, and with docility at the feet of a teacher.

Duties are ours, events are God's. This removes an infinite burden from the shoulders of a miserable, tempted, dying creature. On this consideration only can he securely lay down his head and close his eyes.

The Christian often thinks, and schemes, and talks like a practical Atheist. His eye is so conversant with second causes, that the great mover is little regarded. And yet those sentiments and that conduct of others, by which his affairs are influenced, are not formed by chance and at random. They are attracted toward the system of his affairs or repelled from them by the Highest Power. We talk of attraction in the universe, but there is no such thing as we are accustomed to consider it. The natural and moral worlds are held together, in their respective operations, by an incessant administration. It is the mighty grasp of a controlling hand which keeps every thing in its station. Were this control suspended, there is nothing adequate to the preservation of harmony and affection between my mind and that of my dearest friend for a single hour.

Lord Chesterfield tells his son, that when he entered into the world and heard the conjectures and notions about public affairs, he was surprised at their folly, because he was in the secret, and knew what was passing in the Cabinet. We negotiate; we make treaties;

we make war; we cry for peace; we have public hopes and fears; we distrust one minister, and we repose on another; we recall one general or admiral, because he has lost the national confidence, and we send out another with a full tide of hopes and expectations. We find something in men and measures, as the sufficient cause of all sufferings or anticipations. But a religious man enters the Cabinet; he sees, in all public fears and difficulties, the pressure of God's hand. So long as this pressure continues, he knows that we may move heaven and earth in vain; everything is bound up in icy fetters. But when God removes his hand, the waters flow, measures avail, and hopes are accomplished.

We are too apt to forget our actual dependence on Providence for the circumstances of every instant. The most trivial events may determine our state in the world. Turning up one street instead of another, may bring us into company with a person whom we should not otherwise have met; and this may lead to a train of other events which may determine the happiness or misery of our lives.

Light may break in upon a man after he has taken a particular step; but he will not condemn himself for the step taken in a less degree of light; he may hereafter see still better than he now does, and have reason to alter his opinion again. It is enough to satisfy us of our duty, if we are conscious that, at the time we take a step, we have an adequate motive. If we are conscious of a wrong motive, or of a rash proceeding, for such steps we must expect to suffer.

Trouble or difficulty befalling us after any particular step, is not, of itself, an argument that the step was wrong. A storm overtook the disciples in the ship; but this was no proof that they had done wrong to go on board. Esau met Jacob, and occasioned him great fear and anxiety, when he left Laban; but this did not prove him to have done wrong in the step which he had taken. Difficulties are no ground of presumption against us, when we did not run into them in following our own will; yet the Israelites were with difficulty convinced that they were in the path of duty when they found themselves shut in by the Red Sea. Christians, and especially ministers, must expect troubles; it is in this way that God leads them; he conducts them "*per ardua ad astra.*" They would be in imminent danger if the multitude at all times cried, "Hosanna!"

We must remember that we are short-sighted creatures. We are like an unskilful chess-player, who takes the next piece, while a skilful one looks further. He who "sees the end from the beginning" will often appoint us a most inexplicable way to walk in. Joseph was put into the pit and the dungeon; but this was the way which led to the throne.

We often want to know too much and too soon. We want the light of to-morrow, but it will not come till to-morrow. And then a slight turn, perhaps, will throw such light on our path, that we shall be astonished we saw not our way before. "I can wait," says Lavater. This is a high attainment. We must labour, therefore, to be quiet in that path from which we cannot recede without danger and evil.

There is not a nobler sight in the world than an

aged and experienced Christian, who, having been sifted in the sieve of temptation, stands forth as a confirmer of the assaulted—testifying, from his own trials, the reality of religion; and meeting, by his warnings, and directions, and consolations, the cases of all who may be tempted to doubt it.

The Christian expects his reward, not as due to merit; but as connected, in a constitution of grace, with those acts which grace enables him to perform. The pilgrim, who has been led to the gate of heaven, will not knock there as worthy of being admitted; but the gate shall open to him, because he is brought thither. He who "sows," even "with tears," the "precious seed" of faith, hope, and love, "shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him;" because it is in the very nature of that seed to yield, under the kindly influence secured to it, a joyful harvest.

ON SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

ON A MINISTER'S QUALIFYING HIMSELF FOR HIS OFFICE.

When a young minister sets out, he should sit down and ask himself, *How he may best qualify himself for his office?*

How does a physician qualify himself? It is not enough that he offers to feel the pulse. He must read, and inquire, and observe, and make experiments, and correct himself again and again. He must lay in a stock of medical knowledge before he begins to feel the pulse.

The minister is a physician of a far higher order. He has a vast field before him. He has to study an infinite variety of constitutions. He is to furnish himself with the knowledge of the whole system of remedies. He is to be a man of skill and expedient. If one thing fail, he must know how to apply another. Many intricate and perplexed cases will come before him: it will be disgraceful to him not to be prepared

other men. No man of eminence in his profession is destitute of such a partial feeling for his profession, though his judgment may remonstrate with him thereon as an unfounded partiality. The minister, however, is required so to view all other pursuits; he alone is the man whose aim is eternity; he alone is the man whose office and profession, in all their parts, are raised into dignity and importance by their direct reference to eternity. For eternity he schemes, and plans, and labours.

He should become a philosopher also; he should make experiments on himself and others, in order to find out what will produce effect. He is a fisherman; and the fisherman must fit himself to his employment. If some fish will bite only by day, he must fish by day; if others will bite only by moonlight, he must fish for them by moonlight. He has an engine to work, and it must be his most assiduous endeavour to work his engine to the full extent of its powers; and to find out its powers, is the first step toward success and effect. Many men play admirably on the organ, if you would allow to them that there is no difference between an organ and a harpsichord, but they have utterly mistaken its powers. Combination is the unrivalled excellence of the organ, and therefore he only can display its powers who studies the chords and stops in all their infinite variety of resolution and composition, rather than the rapid motion of his fingers only.

But all the minister's efforts will be vanity, or worse than vanity, if he have not unction. Unction must come down from heaven, and spread a savour, and relish, and feeling over his ministry. And, among all the other means of qualifying himself for his office, the

Bible must hold the first place, and the last also must be given to "the word of God and prayer."

ON THE ASSISTANCE WHICH A MINISTER HAS REASON TO EXPECT IN THE DISCHARGE OF HIS PUBLIC DUTY.

MEN have carried their views on this subject to extremes. Enthusiasts have said that learning, and that studying and writing sermons, have injured the church. The accurate men have said, "Go and hear one of these enthusiasts hold forth!"

But both classes may be rendered useful. Let each correct its evils, yet do its work in its own way.

Some men set up exorbitant notions about accuracy. But exquisite accuracy is totally lost on mankind. The greater part of those who hear, cannot be brought to see the points of the accurate man. The Scriptures are not written in this manner. I should advise a young minister to break through all such cobwebs as these unphilosophical men would spin round him. An humble and modest man is silenced if he sees one of these critics before him. He should say, "I am God's servant. To my own Master I stand or fall. I will labour according to the utmost ability which God giveth, and leave all consequences to him."

We are especially taught in the New Testament to glorify the Spirit of God; and in his gracious operations in our ministry we are nearer the apostolic times than we often think ourselves.

But this assistance is to be expected by us, as labour-

he is held forth with simplicity. All the lines must centre in him. I feel this in my own experience, and therefore I govern my ministry by it; but then this is to be done according to the analogy of faith—not ignorantly, absurdly, and falsely. I doubt not, indeed, but that excess on this side is less pernicious than excess on the other, because God will bless his own especial ordinance, though partially understood and partially exhibited.

There are many weighty reasons for rendering Christ prominent in our ministry:—

1. *Christ cheers the prospect.*—Every thing connected with him has light and gladness thrown round it. I look out of my window—the scene is scowling, dark, frigid, forbidding; I shudder, my heart is chilled. But let the sun break forth from the cloud, I can feel, I can act, I can spring.

2. *God descending and dwelling with man is a truth so infinitely grand, that it must absorb all other.*—"You are his attendants! Well. But the King! There he is!—the King."

3. *Out of Christ God is not intelligible, much less amiable.*—Such men as Clarke and Abernethy talk sublime nonsense. A sick woman said to me, "Sir! I have no notion of God. I can form no notion of him. You talk to me about him, but I cannot get a single idea that seems to contain anything." But you know how to conceive of Jesus Christ as a man! God comes down to you in him, full of kindness and condescension. "Ah! sir, that gives me something to lay hold on. There I can rest. I understand God in his Son." But if God is not intelligible out of Christ, much less is he amiable, though I ought to feel him

so. He is an object of horror and aversion to me, corrupted as I am! I fear, I tremble, I resist, I hate, I rebel.

4. *A preacher may pursue his topic, without being led by it to Christ.*—A man who is accustomed to investigate topics is in danger. He takes up his topic and pursues it; he takes up another and pursues it. At length Jesus Christ becomes his topic, and then he pursues that. If he cannot so feel and think as to bend all subjects naturally and gracefully to Christ, he must seek his remedy in selecting such as are more evangelical.

5. *God puts peculiar honour on the preaching of Christ crucified.*—A philosopher may philosophise his hearers, but the preaching of Christ must convert them. John the Baptist will make his hearers tremble; but if "the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he," let him exhibit that peculiar feature of his superiority—Jesus Christ. Men may preach Christ ignorantly, blunderingly, absurdly; yet God will give it efficacy, because he is determined to magnify his own ordinance.

6. *God seems, in the doctrine of the Cross, to design the destruction of man's pride.*—Even the murderer and the adulterer sometimes become subjects of the grace of the gospel, because the murderer and adulterer are more easily convinced and humbled; but the man of virtue is seldom reached, because the man of virtue disdains to descend. "Remember me!" saved a dying malefactor. "God, I thank thee!" condemned a proud Pharisee.

Every minister should therefore inquire, "What is for me the wisest way of preaching Christ to men?"

Some seem to think that in the choice of a wise way, there lurks always a trimming disposition. There are men, doubtless, who will sacrifice to self even Christ Jesus the Lord; but they of all men are farthest from the thing. There is a secret in doing it, which none but an honest man can discover. The knave is not half wise enough.

We are not to judge one another in these things. Sufficient it is to us to know what we have to do. There are different ways of doing the same thing, and that with success and acceptance. We see this in the apostles themselves. They not only preached Christ in different ways, but what is more, they could not do this like one another. They declare this fact themselves, and acknowledge the grace of God in their respective gifts. "Our beloved brother Paul writes," says St Peter, "according to the wisdom given unto him." But there are Peters in our days who would say, "Paul is too learned. Away with these things, which are hard to be understood. He should be more simple; I dislike all this reasoning." And there are Pauls who would say, "Peter is rash and unguarded; he should put a curb on his impetuosity." And there are Johns who would say, "They should both discharge their office in my soft and winning manner. No good will come of this fire and noise." Nothing of this sort. "Each hath his proper gift of God; one after this manner, and another after that;" and each seems only desirous "to occupy faithfully till his Master come," leaving his brethren to "stand or fall to their own Master."

Tóo much dependence is often placed on a system of rational contrivance. An ingenious man thinks he can

so manage to preach Christ, that his hearers will say, "Here is nothing of Methodism! This has nothing to do with that system!" I will venture to say, if this is the sentiment communicated by his ministry, that he has not delivered his message. The people do not know what he means, or he has kept back part of God's truth. He has fallen on a carnal contrivance, to avoid a cross, and he does no good to souls. The whole message must be delivered, and it is better it should be delivered even coarsely than not at all. We may lay it down as a principle, that if the gospel be a medicine, and a specific too, as it is, it must be got down such as it is. Any attempt to sophisticate and adulterate will deprive it of its efficacy, and will often recoil on the man who makes the attempt to his shame and confusion. The Jesuits tried to render Christianity palatable to the Chinese by adulterating it, but the Jesuits were driven with abhorrence from the empire.

If we have to deal with men of learning, let us show learning so far as to demonstrate that it bears its testimony to the truth. But accommodation in manner must often spring from humility. We must condescend to the capacity of men, and make the truth intelligible to them.

If this be our manner of preaching Christ, we must make up our minds not to regard the little caviller, who will judge us by the standard of his favourite author or preacher. We must be cautious, too, since men of God have been and ever will be the butt and scorn of the world, of thinking that we can escape its sneers and censures. It is a foolish project to avoid giving offence; but it is our duty to avoid giving unnecessary offence. It is necessary offence, if it is given

by the truth; but it is unnecessary, if our own occasion it.

I have often thought that St Paul was rais peculiarly to be an example to others, in labour discover the wisest way of exhibiting the gospel only that he was to be a great pattern in other] but designedly raised up for this very thing. does he labour to make the truth reasonably How does he strain every nerve, and ransack corner of the heart, to make it reasonably pala We need not be instructed in his particular m when he says, "I became all things to all men, any means I might save some." His history is a ment on the declaration.

The knowledge of Jesus Christ is a wonderfu tery. Some men think they preach Christ glor because they name him every two minutes in sermons; but that is not preaching Christ. To stand, and enter into, and open his various offic characters—the glories of his person and worl relation to us, and ours to him, and to Go Father and God the Spirit through him—this knowledge of Christ. The divines of the prese are stunted dwarfs in this knowledge, compare the great men of the last age. To know Jesus for ourselves is to make him a consolation, d strength, righteousness, companion, and end.

This is the aspect in which religion should b sented to mankind: it is suited, above all oth produce effect; and effect is our object. We take human nature as we find human nature. must take human nature in great cities, as w human nature in great cities. We may say—'

or that is the aspect which *ought* to have most effect: we must illuminate the mind: we must enlist the reason: we must attack the conscience." We may do all this, and yet our comparative want of success in begetting and educating the sons of glory, may demonstrate to us that there is some more effective way; and that sound sense and philosophy call on us to adopt that way, *because* it is most effective.

Our system of preaching must meet mankind; they must find it *possible* to live in the bustle of the world, and yet serve God: after being worried and harassed with its concerns, let them hear cheering truths concerning Christ's love and care and pity, which will operate like an enchantment in dispelling the cares of life, and calming the anxious perturbations of conscience. Bring forward privileges, and enforce duties in their proper places and proportions.

Let there be no extremes; yet I am arrived at this conviction—Men who lean toward the extreme of evangelical privileges in their ministry, do much more to the conversion of their hearers than they do who lean toward the extreme of requirement. And my own experience confirms my observation. I feel myself repelled, if anything chills, loads, or urges me. This is my nature, and I see it to be very much the nature of other men. But let me hear, "Son of man, thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord,"—I am melted and subdued.

ON A MINISTER'S FAMILIAR INTERCOURSE WITH HIS HEARERS.

WHAT passes on these occasions too often savours of this world. We become one among our hearers. They come to church on Sunday, and we preach: the week comes round again, and its nonsense with it. Now, if a minister were what he should be, the people would feel it. They would not attempt to introduce this dawdling, silly, diurnal chat. When we countenance this, it looks as though, "On the Sunday I am ready to do *my* business, and in the week you may do *yours*." This lowers the tone of what I say on the Sabbath. It forms a sad comment on my preaching.

I have traced, I think, some of the evil that lies at the root of this. We are more concerned to be thought gentlemen than to be felt as ministers. Now, being desirous to be thought a man who has kept good company, strikes at the root of that rough work—the bringing of God into his own world. It is hard and rough work to bring God into his own world. To talk of a Creator, and Preserver, and Redeemer, is an outrage on the feelings of most companies.

There is important truth in what Mr Wesley said to his preachers, when rightly understood, however it may have been ridiculed:—"You have no more to do with being gentlemen than dancing-masters." The character of a minister is far beyond that of a mere gentleman. It takes a higher walk. He will, indeed, study to be a real gentleman: he will be the farthest possible from a rude man: he will not disdain to learn, nor to practise the decencies of society; but he will sustain a still higher character.

It is a snare to a minister, when in company, to be drawn out to converse largely on the state of the Funds, and on the news of the day. He should know the world, and what is doing in the world, and should give things of this nature their due place and proportion; but if he can be drawn out to give strong opinions on this or that subject of politics or literature, he is lowered in his tone. A man of sense feels something violent in the transition from such conversation to the Bible and to prayer.

Dinner visits can seldom be rendered really profitable to the mind. The company are so much occupied that little good is to be done. A minister should show his sense of the value of time: it is a sad thing when those around him begin to yawn. He must be a man of business. It is not sufficiently considered how great the sin of idleness is. We talk in the pulpit of the value of time, but we act too little on what we say.

Let a minister who declines associating much with his hearers, satisfy himself that he has a good reason for doing so. If reproached for not visiting them so much as they wish, let him have a just reason to assign. A man who is at work for his family may have as much love for them as the wife, though she is always with them.

I fell into a mistake, when a young man, in thinking that I could talk with men of the world on their own ground, and could thus win them over to mine. I was fond of painting, and so talked with them on that subject. This pleased them: but I did not consider that I gave a consequence to their pursuits which does not belong to them; whereas I ought to have endeavoured to raise them above these, that they might engage in

higher. I did not see this at the time; but I now see it to have been a great error. A wealthy man builds a fine house, and opens to himself fine prospects; he wants you to see them, for he is sick of them himself. They thus draw you into their schemes. A man has got ten thousand pounds: you congratulate him on it, and that without any intimation of his danger or his responsibility. Now, you may tell him in the pulpit that riches are nothing worth; but you will tell him this in vain, while you tell him out of it that they are.

Lord Chesterfield says, a man's character is degraded when he is to be had. A minister ought never to be had.

ON A MINISTER'S ENCOURAGING ANIMADVERSION ON HIMSELF.

It is a serious inquiry for a minister, How far he should encourage animadversion on himself in his hearers. He will encounter many ignorant and many censorious remarks, but he may gain much on the whole.

He should lay down to himself a few principles.

It is better that a minister smart than mistake. It is better that a traveller meet a surly, impertinent fellow to direct him in his way than lose his way. A minister is so important in his office, that, whatever others think of it, he should regard this, and this only, as the transaction for eternity. But a man may be labouring in the fire, he may be turning the world upside down, and yet be wrong. You say, he must read his Bible. True; but he must use all means. He must build his usefulness on this principle, if by any means. If the wheel

hitches, let him, by any means, discover where it hitches. This principle is to be worked continually in his mind. He must labour to keep it up to a fine, keen edge. Let him never believe that his view of himself is sufficient. A merchant sailing in quest of gain is so intent on his object, that he will take a hint from any man. If we had all the meaning to which we pretend in our pursuits, we should feel and act like him.

A minister must lay down also as a principle, that he will never sufficiently understand his own pride and self-love, and that confidence in his own sense which cleaves closely to every man. He must consider this as the general malady. Man is blind and obstinate—poor and proud. This silly creature, through ignorance of this principle, will not only not hear a vulgar hearer who animadverts on him, but he will scarcely listen to a superior man among his hearers. He attends to such a one, because it would be indecent not to attend. But he finds some excuse for himself in his own bosom. He reverences what is said very little, if at all. He strokes and flatters himself, and makes up the affair very well in his own mind.

A minister should consider how much more easily a weak man can read a wise man, than a wise man can read himself, and that for this reason,—no man can see and hear himself. He is too much formed in his own habits, his family notions, his closet notions, to detect himself. He who stands by and sees a game played has vast advantages over the players. Besides, preachers err systematically, learnedly, scientifically. The simple hearer has an appeal to nature in his heart. He can often feel that his minister is wrong, when he is not able to set him right. Dr Manton, no doubt, thought

he had preached well, and as became him, before the Lord Mayor; but he felt himself reproved and instructed when a poor man pulled him by the sleeve, and told him he had understood nothing of his sermon. There was an appeal in this poor man's breast to nature; nature could not make any thing of the doctor's learning. When Apelles took his stand behind his picture, he was a wise man; and he was a wise man, too, when he altered the shoe on the hint of the cobbler. The cobbler in his place was to be heard.

A minister should consider, too, that few will venture to speak to a public man. It is a rare thing to hear a man say, "Upon my word that thing, or your general manner, is defective or improper." If a wise man says this, he shows a regard which the united stock of five hundred flatterers will not equal. I would set down half the blunders of ministers to their not listening to animadversion. I have heard it said—for the men who would animadvert on us talk among themselves if we refuse to let them talk to us—I have heard it said, "Why don't you talk to him?" "Why don't I talk to him! because he will not hear!"

Let him consider, moreover, that this aversion from reproof is not wise. This is a symptom of the disease. Why should he want this hushing-up of the disorder? This is a mark of a little mind. A great man can afford to lose; a little, insignificant fellow is afraid of being snuffed out.

A minister mistakes who should refuse to read any anonymous letters. He may, perhaps, see nothing in them the first time; but, let him read them again and again. The writer raises his superstructure, probably, on a slight basis; yet there is generally some sort of occa-

sion. If he points out but a small error, yet that is worth detecting.

In the present habits of men, it is so difficult to get them to tell the naked truth, that a minister should show disposition to be corrected: he should show himself to be sensible of the want of it. He is not to encourage idle people: that could be productive of no possible good.

These are some of the reasons for a minister's encouragement, in a judicious manner, of animadversion on himself in his hearers.

Sometimes, however, a man will come who appears to be an impertinent man, independently of what he has to remark—a man who is evidently disposed to be troublesome. Such a man came to me with, "Sir, you said such a thing that seemed to lean to the doctrine of universal redemption. Pray, sir, may I speak a little with you on that subject?" The manner of the man at once marked his character. He seemed to bring with him this kind of sentiment—"I'll go and set that man right. I'll call that man to account." It was a sort of democratic insolence of mind. Instead of answering him as he expected, I treated him as a child. I turned it into an occasion of preaching a sermon to him:—"Sir, do you come to instruct me, or to be instructed? Before we enter on a question which has exercised the greatest men, we want a preparedness of mind: want a deep humility—a teachableness—a spirit of dependence—of which you seem to me to have but little."

On the other hand, a man may come, quite as ignorant as the other, yet a simple character. I have distressed him. Though he cannot, perhaps, be made to understand what he inquires about, yet a minister

should say to himself, "Have I puzzled him? He is wounded, and he comes for help."

A minister should remember that he is not always to act and speak authoritatively. He sits on his friend's chair, and his friend says his things to him with frankness. They may want, perhaps, a little decorum; but he should receive them in the most friendly and good-humoured way in the world. A thing strikes this man and that man: he may depend on it that it has some foundation.

But there are persons whom a minister should more than encourage to animadvert on him. He should employ them. He should explain himself to them. He does not merely want an account of his sermon, but he employs them on business. To such sensible persons he will say,—"What serious judgment do you form of my preaching? Do tell me what sort of man I am."

A minister has to treat with another sort of hearers—uncandid men, and yet men of capacity: a sort of men who are not now pleased and then displeased. They spy a blot everywhere. He is likely to make a mistake with regard to such men:—"What signifies the opinion of that man? That man can never be pleased." True! that man cannot be pleased, but it does not follow that he tells you no truth. In treating with such a man, he should say—"His edge may be too keen for candour and sound judgment; yet, if it lays open to me what I could not otherwise see, let me improve by its keenness. What hurt can he do me? He may damp or irritate others by talking thus to them; but let me learn what is to be learnt from him." Such a man lifts a minister from his standing, where he settles down too easily and

. If I know a man to be of this class, I will dis-
ɜh: "This is the man, but that is myself!" If
ld write a book to stand the fire, let me find out
verest censor. My friend is but half the man:
s a consentaneousness of sentiment between us:
ve fallen in together, till we scarcely know how
er from each other. Let the man come who says
ere I can discover you to yourself; and there!"
est hints, perhaps, are obtained from snarling
. Medicaments make the patient smart, but
eal.

a minister must not take this in the gross. He
to invite rude men round his door. If he suffers
arers to treat him irreverently—if he allow them
pute with him on every occasion—he will bring
on the church. "The priest's lips must keep
edge." If a parent allow his children to question
hing, so that nothing is to be settled without a
ed proofs, they will soon despise their teacher, for
will think themselves able to teach him. The
:er must have decided superiority and authority,
will want one of the principal qualities of his
try. This is not inconsistent with receiving hints.
ay mistake in some things: but he should mark
omplexion of his congregation in deciding how far
are to be heard on his mistakes. If the people are
', forward, confident in their own sense, they are
to be encouraged. They are gone too far.

ON THE LIMITS WHICH A MINISTER SHOULD PUT TO THE INDULGENCE OF HIS CURIOSITY, WITH REGARD TO PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS.

An extreme is to be avoided. Some persons would condemn even rational curiosity. But "the works of the Lord are great: sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." I would not object, therefore, to visit the museum; or to go to see the rare natural productions often exhibited. I would enlarge, too, my views of man and the world, by frequenting the panoramas of cities. And, though I would not run after every sight, yet I would use my liberty in selecting.

But some are in an opposite extreme. They are found everywhere. But he who sustains the character of "a scribe of the kingdom of heaven," ought not to be found everywhere. The man who is "seeking a heavenly country," will show the spirit of one whose conversation is there.

There is something in religion, when rightly apprehended, that is masculine and grand. It removes those little desires which are "the constant hectic of a fool."

Everything of the drama, and whatever is so distinctly the "course of this world," must be shunned. If a minister take one step into the world, his hearers will take two. Much may be learnt from the sentiments of men of the world. If a man of this character who heard me preach should meet me where he would say, "Why, I did not expect to see you here!" —then he ought not to have seen me there.

There must be measure and proportion in our atten-

tion to arts and sciences. These were the very idols of the heathen world: and what are they, who now follow them with an idolatrous eagerness, but like children, who are charmed with the sparkling of a rocket, and yet see nothing in the sun?

Yet I would not indulge a cynical temper. If I go through a gentleman's gallery of pictures, I would say, "This is an admirable Claude!"—but I would take occasion to drop a hint of something higher and better, and to make it felt that I fell in with these things rather incidentally than purposely. But all this must be done with tenderness and humility: "I tread on the pride of Plato," said Diogenes, as he walked over Plato's carpet: "Yes—and with more pride," said Plato.

"They pass best over the world," said Queen Elizabeth, "who trip over it quickly; for it is but a bog. If we stop, we sink."

I would not make it my criterion—"Christ would not come hither!" I must take a lower standard in these things. I am a poor creature, and must be contented to learn in many places, and by many scenes, which Christ need not to have frequented.

ON THE MEANS OF PROMOTING A SPIRIT OF DEVOTION IN CONGREGATIONS.

Let us ask, "What is man?" He is a creature of feeling, as well as of intellect. We must interest him as we can. It is unphilosophical to depend on the mere statement of truth. No doubt there is a contrary

error; for what is the end of exciting attention, if their is nothing deserving attention?

It is of the first importance to put meaning into every part of the service. In either extreme, of appealing to the understanding or the feelings, there may be no meaning: in a dull and lifeless preacher, there is no meaning; and in one of a contrary character, there may be nothing worthy of the name.

There is, besides, too little attention, in many churches, to man as man. I would consult his convenience in all lawful points. If he could sit easier on cushions, he should have cushions. I would not tell him to be warm in God's service, while I leave him to shiver with cold. No doors should creak; no windows should rattle.

Music has an important effect on devotion. Wherever fantastical music enters, it betrays a corrupt principle. A congregation cannot enter into it; or, if it does, it cannot be a Christian congregation. Wherever there is an attempt to set off the music in the service, and the attempt is apparent, it is the first step toward carnality. Though there is too little life in the style of music adopted among the Moravians, yet the simplicity of Christianity pervades their devotion.

Order is important. Some persons, by coming in when they please, propagate a loose habit of mind. For man is a sympathetic creature; and what he sees others neglect, he is in danger of growing negligent in himself. If the reader goes through the service as though the great business for which they are assembled is not yet begun, the people will soon feel thus themselves.

The minister should take occasion frequently to

impress on the people the importance of the work in which they are engaged. It is not enough to take it for granted that they feel this. We must take nothing for granted. Man needs to be reminded of everything, for he soon forgets everything.

Monotony must be, above all things, avoided. The mind is vagrant; monotony cannot recall it. There may be continued vehemence, while the attention is not excited; it is disturbance and noise; there is nothing to lead the mind into a useful train of thought or feeling.

There is an opposite error to vehemence. Men of sense and literature depress devotion by treating things abstractedly. Simplicity, with good sense, is of unspeakable value. Religion must not be rendered abstract and curious. If a curious remark presents itself, reserve it for another place. The hearer gets away from the bustle and business of the week; he comes trembling under his fears; he would mount upward in his spirit; but a curious etymological disquisition chills and repels him.

In truth, we should be men of business in our congregations. We should endeavour both to excite and instruct our hearers. We should render the service an interesting affair in all its parts. We should rouse men: we should "bind up the broken-hearted;" we should "comfort the feeble-minded;" we should "support the weak;" we should "become all things to all men, if by any means we may save some."

ON THE MARRIAGE OF CHRISTIAN MINISTERS.

It seems to me that many men do not give sufficient weight to our Lord's observations upon those "who made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake," nor to St Paul's reasoning on the subject of marriage. I would only imply, that both our Lord and the apostle seem to establish it as a principle, that a single state, when it can be chosen, and is chosen for the sake of the gospel, is the superior state. This, I fear, is too much forgotten; and those men, who might have "received the saying," and have done more service to the Church of God by receiving it, have given it little or no weight in their deliberations.

And yet it ought to be considered, that the very character which would best fit men for living in a single state, would abstract them too much from the feelings and wants of their people. I am fully sensible that I should have been hardened against the distresses of my hearers, if I had not been reduced from my natural stoicism by domestic sufferings.

The cases, I allow, are extremely few, in which a man may do, on the whole, more service to the Church by imitating St Paul than by marrying; yet there are such cases; and it behoves every minister seriously to consider himself and his situation, before he determines on marriage. He should not regard this state as indispensably necessary to him, but should always remember that, *cæteris paribus*, he who remains single is most worthy of honour.

But when it is proper that a minister should marry, and he has determined to do it, how few select such

women as suit their high and holy character! A minister is like a man who has undertaken to traverse the world. He has not only fair and pleasant ground to travel over, but he must encounter deserts, and marshes, and mountains. The traveller wants a firm and steady stay. His wife should be, above all things, a woman of faith and prayer—a woman, too, of a sound mind and of a tender heart—and one who will account it her glory to lay herself out in co-operating with her husband, by meeting his wants and soothing his cares. She should be his unfailing resource, so far as he ought to seek this in the creature. Blessed is she who is thus qualified and thus lives!

But, after all, the married minister, if he would live devotedly, must move in a determined sphere. Whatever his wife may be, yet she is a woman; and if things are to go on well, they must have two separate worlds. There may, indeed, be cases when a man, with something of a soft and feminine cast about his mind, may be united to a woman of a mind so superior and cultivated, that he may choose to make it his plan that they shall move in the same world. In such rare cases it may be done with less inconvenience than in any other. But even here the highest end is sacrificed to feeling. Every man, whatever be his natural disposition, who would urge his powers to the highest end, must be a man of solitary studies. Some uxorious men of considerable minds have moved so much in the women's world, that reflection, disquisition, and the energies of thought have been ruined by the habit of indulging the lighter, softer, and more playful qualities. Such a man is, indeed, the idol of the female world; but he would rather deserve to be so, if he stood upon

his own ground while he attempted to meet their wants, instead of descending to mingle among them.

God has put a difference between the sexes, but education and manners have put a still greater. They are designed to move in separate spheres, but occasionally to unite together in order to soften and relieve each other. To attempt any subversion of God's design herein is being wiser than He who made us, and who has so established this affair that each sex has its separate and appropriate excellence, only to be attained by pursuing it in the order of nature. Thought is or ought to be the characterising feature of the man, and feeling that of the woman.

Every man and woman in the world has an appropriate mind, and that in proportion to their strength of thought and feeling. Each has a way of their own—a habit—a system—a world—separated and solitary, in which no person on earth can have communion with them. Job says of God, "He knoweth the way that I take;" and, when the Christian finds a want of competency in his bosom-friend to understand and meet his way, he turns with an especial nearness and familiarity of confidence to God, who knoweth it in all its connections and associations, its peculiarities and its imperfections.

I may be thought to speak harshly of the female character; but, whatever persuasion I have of its intended distinction from that of man, I esteem a woman, who aims only to be what God designed her to be, as honourable as any man on earth. She stands not in the same order of excellence, but she is equally honourable.

But women have made themselves, and weak men have contributed to make them, what God never de-

signed them to be. Let any thinking man survey the female character as it now stands—often nervous, debilitated, and imaginative, and this superinduced chiefly by education and manners—and he will find it impossible that any great vigour of mind can be preserved, or any high intellectual pursuits cultivated, so far as this character stands in his way.

"Doing as others do," is the prevalent principle of the present female character, to whatever absurd, preposterous, masculine, or even wicked lengths it may lead. This is, so far as it avails with man or woman, the ruin, death, and grave of all that is noble, and virtuous, and praiseworthy.

A studious man, whose time is chiefly spent at home, and especially a minister, ought not to have to meet the imaginary wants of his wife. The disorders of an imaginative mind are beyond calculation. He is not worthy the name of a husband who will not with delight nurse his wife, with all possible tenderness and love, through a real visitation, however long; but he is ruined if he falls upon a woman of a sickly fancy. It is scarcely to be calculated what an influence the spirit of his wife will have on his own, and on all his ministerial affairs. If she comes not up to the full standard, she will so far impede him, derange him, unsanctify him.

If there is such a thing as good in this world, it is in the ministerial office. The affairs of this employment are the greatest in this world. In prosecuting these with a right spirit, the minister keeps in motion a vast machine; and such are the incalculable consequences of his wife's character to him, that, if she assist him not in urging forward the machine, she will hang as a dead weight upon its wheels.

A woman may have a high taste; her natural temper may be peevish and fretful; she may have a delicate and fastidious mind; she may long for every thing she sees. It is not enough that she is in reality a pious woman. Her taste, her mind, her manners must have a decorum and congruity to her husband's office and situation. She must bear to be crossed in her wishes for unsuitable objects. He will say, with firmness, "This shall not be. It is not enough that it would gratify you: it is wrong. It is not enough that it is not flagrantly sinful: it is improper, unsuitable to our character and station.* It is not enough that money will buy it, and I have got money: it would be a culpable use of our talent. It is not enough that your friend possesses such a thing: we stand and fall to our own Master."

ON VISITING DEATH-BEDS.

I HAVE found it, in many cases, a difficult thing to deal with a death-bed. We are called in to death-beds of various kinds.

The true pilgrim sends for us to set before him the food on which he has fed throughout his journey. He has a keen appetite. He wants strength and vigour for the last effort, and then all is for ever well. He is gone home, and is at rest.

Another man sends for us, because it is decent, or his friends importune him, or his conscience is alarmed;

* "Nec, tibi quid liceat, sed quid fecisse decebit,
Occurrat."—*Claudian.*

but he is ignorant of sin and of salvation: he is either indifferent about both, or he has made up his mind in his own way: he wants the minister to confirm him in his own views, and smooth over the wound. I have seen such men mad with rage, while I have been beating down their refuges of lies, and setting forth to them God's refuge. There is a wise and holy medium to be observed in treating such cases:—"I am not come to daub you over with untempered mortar: I am not come to send you to the bar of God with a lie in your right hand. But neither am I come to mortify you, to put you to unnecessary pain, to embitter you, or to exasperate you." There is a kindness, affection, tenderness, meekness, and patience, through which a man's feelings and conscience will condemn him while he opposes. I have found it a very effectual method to begin with myself: it awakens attention, conciliates the mind, and insinuates conviction:—"Whatever others think of themselves, I stand condemned before God: my heart is so desperately wicked, that, if God had not showed me in his Word a remedy in Jesus Christ, I should be in despair: I can only tell you what I am, and what I have found. If you believe yourselves to be what God has told me I am and all men are, then I can tell you where and how to find mercy and eternal life: if you will not believe that you are this sort of man, I have nothing to offer you. I know of nothing else for man, beside that which God has showed me." My descriptions of my own fallen nature have excited perfect astonishment: sometimes my patients have seemed scarcely able to credit me; but I have found that God has fastened, by this means, conviction on the conscience. In some cases,

an indirect method of addressing the conscience may apparently be, in truth, the most direct; but we are to use this method wisely and sparingly. It seems to me to be one of the characteristics of the day, in the religious world, to err on this subject. We have found out a circuitous way of exhibiting truth. The plain, direct, simple exhibition of it is often abandoned, even where no circumstances justify and require a more insinuating manner. There is dexterity indeed, and address in this; but too little of the simple declaration of the testimony of God, which St Paul opposes to "excellency of speech or of wisdom," and to "enticing words of man's wisdom." We have done very little when we have merely persuaded men to think as we do.

But we have to deal with a worse death-bed character than with the man who opposes the truth. Some men assent to every thing which we propose. They will even anticipate us. And yet we see that they mean nothing. I have often felt, when with such persons, "I would they could be brought to contradict and oppose! That would lead to discussion. God might, peradventure, dash the stony heart in pieces. But this heart is like water. The impression dies as fast as it is made." I have sought for such views as might rouse and stir up opposition. I have tried to irritate the torpid mind, but all in vain. I once visited a young clergyman of this character, who was seized with a dangerous illness at a coffee-house in town, whither some business had brought him. The first time I saw him we conversed very closely together; and, in the prospect of death, he seemed solicitous to prepare for it. But I could make no sort of impression upon him. All I could possibly say met his entire approbation, though I saw his heart

felt no interest in it. When I visited him a second time, the fear of death was gone, and with it all solicitude about religion. He was still civil and grateful, but he tried to parry off the business on which he knew I came. "I will show you, sir, some little things with which I have worn away the hours of my confinement and solitude." He brought out a quantity of pretty and tasty drawings. I was at a loss how to express, with suitable force and delicacy, the high sense I felt of his indecorum and insipidity, and to leave a deep impression on his conscience. I rose, however, instantly—said my time was expired, wished him well, and withdrew.

Sometimes we have a painful part to act with sincere men who have been carried too much into the world. I was called in to visit such a man. "I find no comfort," he said; "God veils his face from me. Every thing round me is dark and uncertain." I did not dare to act the flatterer. I said, "Let us look faithfully into the state of things. I should have been surprised if you had not felt thus. I believe you to be sincere. Your state of feeling evinces your sincerity. Had I found you exulting in God, I should have concluded that you were either deceived or a deceiver; for while God acts in his usual order, how could you expect to feel otherwise on the approach of death than you do feel? You have driven hard after the world. Your spirit has been absorbed in its cares. Your sentiment, your conversation, have been in the spirit of the world. And have you any reason to expect the response of conscience, and the clear evidence which await the man who has walked and lived in close friendship with God? You know that what I say is true." His wife interrupted me by assuring me that he had been an excellent

himself before God,—to tread the earth under his feet,—to hunger and thirst after God in Christ, and after the mind that was in Christ,—with man this is impossible. But God has said it shall be done, and bids me go forth and preach, that by me, as his instrument, he may effect these great ends, and therefore I go. Yet I am obliged continually to call my mind back to my principles. I feel angry, perhaps, with a man, because he will not let me convert him; in spite of all I can say, he will still love the world.

St Paul admonishes Timothy to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." It sometimes falls to the lot of a minister to endure the hard labour of a nurse, in a greater measure than that of a soldier. He has to encounter the difficulties of a peculiar situation; he is the parent of a family of children, of various tempers, manners, habits, and prejudices; if he does not continually mortify himself, he will bear hardly upon some of his children. He has, however, to endure the hardness of calling his child—his friend—to an account; of being thought a severe, jealous, legal man. If a man will let matters take their chance, he may live smoothly and quietly enough; but if he will stir among the servants, and sift things to the bottom, he must bear the consequences. He must account himself a man of strife. His language must be, "It is not enough that you feed me, or fill my pocket; there is something between me and thee." The most tender and delicate of his flock have their failings; his warmest and most zealous supporters break down some where. A sunshiny day breeds most reptiles. It is not enough,

therefore, that the sun shines out in his church. It is not enough that numbers shout applause.

A minister may be placed in a discouraging situation. He may not suit the popular taste; he may not be able to fall into the fashionable style; he may not play well on an instrument. Though an effective man, and a man of energy, he may be under a cloud. The door may be shut against him. Yet it is a dangerous thing for such a man to force open the door. He should rather say, "I have a lesson to learn here; if I teach the people nothing, perhaps they may teach me." The work of winter is to be done, as well as the work of summer.

The hardness which I have to endure is this: Here are a number of families which show me every kind of regard, but I see that they are not right; they somehow so combine the things which they hear, with the things which they do, that I am afraid they will at last lie down in sorrow. Here is my difficulty. I must meet them with gentleness, but I must detect and uncover the evil. I shall want real kindness and common honesty, if I do not. "Ephraim hath grey hairs, yet he knoweth it not. Ephraim is a cake not turned." But if I tell him these things, he and I shall become two persons. He must, however, be so touched in private, for he will not be touched in the pulpit. He will say, "I am not the man."

A minister must "keep under his body, and bring it into subjection." A Newmarket-groom will sweat himself thin, that he may be fit for his office: "Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible."

—— is just come from college. He has a refined, accurate, sensible mind. Some of our friends wish to get him a station at Calcutta. They think him just adapted for that sphere. I differ widely in my view of the matter. A new man, with his college accuracy about him, is not the man for the dissipated and fashionable court at Calcutta. Such a congregation will bid nothing for his acuteness and reasoning. He who is to talk to them with any effect, must have seen life and the world. He must be able to treat with them on their own ground. And he must be able to do it with the authority of a messenger from God, not with the arts and shifts of human eloquence and reasonings. Dr Patten said admirably well, in a sermon which I heard him preach at Oxford, "Beware how you suffer the infidel to draw you upon metaphysical ground. If he get you there, he will have something to say. The evidences and the declarations of God's Word are the weapons with which he must be combated, and before which he must fall."

London is very peculiar as a ministerial walk. Almost all a minister can do, is by the pulpit and the pen. His hearers are so occupied in the world, that if he visit them, every minute perhaps brings in some interruption.

It is a serious question, whether a minister ought to preach at all beyond his experience? He is to stand forth as a witness—but a witness of what he knows, not of what he has been told. He must preach as he feels. If he feels not as he might and ought, he must

pray for such feelings; but, till he has them, ought he to pretend to them? Going faster than the experience led, has been the bane of many. Men have preached in certain terms and phrases according to the tone given by others, while the thing has never been made out even to their conviction, much less in their experience.

It is a most important point of duty in a minister to redeem time. A young minister has sometimes called an old one out of his study, only to ask him how he did. There is a tone to be observed toward such an idler: an intimation may be given, which he will understand, "This is not the house!" In order to redeem time, he must refuse to engage in secular affairs: "No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." He must watch, too, against a dozing away of time; the clock-weight goes down slowly, yet it draws all the works with it.

Owen remarks, that it is not sufficiently considered how such a minister's personal religion is exposed to danger, from the very circumstance of religion being his profession and employment. He must go through the acts of religion; he must put on the appearances of religion; he must utter the language and display the feelings of religion. It requires double diligence and vigilance to maintain, under such circumstances, the spirit of religion. I have prayed; I have talked; I have preached; but now I should perish, after all, if I did not feed on the bread which I have broken to others.

A minister must cultivate a tender spirit. If he does this so as to carry a savour and unction into his work, he will have far more weight than other men. This is the result of a devotional habit. To affect feeling is nauseous and soon detected; but to feel is the readiest way to the hearts of others.

The leading defect in Christian ministers is want of a devotional habit. The Church of Rome made much of this habit. The contests accompanying and following the Reformation, with something of an indiscriminate enmity against some of the good of that church as well as the evil, combined to repress this spirit in the Protestant writings; whereas the mind of Christ seems, in fact, to be the grand end of Christianity in its operation upon man

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There is a manifest want of spiritual influence on the ministry of the present day. I feel it in my own case, and I see it in that of others. I am afraid that there is too much of a low, managing, contriving, manœuvering temper of mind among us. We are laying ourselves out more than is expedient, to meet one man's taste, and another man's prejudices. The ministry is a grand and holy affair; and it should find in us a simple habit of spirit, and a holy but humble indifference to all consequences.

A man of the world will bear to hear me read in the desk that awful passage: "Wide is the gate, and broad

is the way that leadeth to destruction; and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it." Nay, he will approve it: "The minister is in the desk: he is reading the lesson of the day." But this very man—were I to go home with him, and tell him in his parlour that most of those whom he knows and loves are going on in that road to eternal destruction—this very man would brand the sentiment as harsh and uncharitable. Though uttered by Christ himself, it is a declaration as harsh and uncandid, in the judgment of the world, as could be put together in language.

Many hearers cannot enter into the reasons of the Cross. They adopt what I think is Butler's grand defect on this subject. He speaks of the cross as an appointment of God, and therefore to be submitted to: but God has said much in his Word of the reasons of this appointment: that "he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth."

Several things are required to enable a minister to attain a proper variety in his manner. He must be in continual practice; if I were to preach but once a month, I should lose the ability of preaching. He must know that his hearers are attached to him—that they will grant him indulgences and liberties. He must, in some measure, feel himself above his congregation. The presence of a certain brother chills me; because I feel that I can talk on no one subject in the pulpit, with which he is not far better acquainted than I am.

The first duty of a minister is, to call on his hearers to "turn to the Lord." "We have much to speak to you upon. We have many duties to urge on you. We have much instruction to give you—but all will be thrown away, till you have 'turned to the Lord.'" Let me illustrate this by a familiar comparison. You see your child sinking in the water; his education lies near your heart; you are anxious to train him up so that he may occupy well the post assigned to him in life. But when you see him drowning, the first thoughts are, not how you may educate him, but how you may save him. Restore him to life, and then call that life into action.

A disinterested regard to truth should be, what it very seldom is, the most striking character in a Christian minister. His purpose should be to make proselytes to truth, and not to any thing which may be particular in his views of it. "Read my books," says one. "No!" says another, "read mine." And thus religion is taken up by piecemeal, and the mind is diverted from its nature by false associations. If the teacher whom this man has chosen for his oracle, disgrace religion by irreligious conduct, he stumbles. He stumbles because he has not been fixed upon the sole and immovable basis of the religion of the Bible. The mind well instructed in the Scriptures can bear to see even its spiritual father make shipwreck of the faith and scandalise the gospel, but will remain itself unmoved. The man is in possession of a treasure, which, if others are foolish enough to abandon, yet they cannot detract any thing from the value attached to it in his esteem.

That a minister may learn how to magnify his office, let him study the character, the spirit, and the history of St Paul. His life and death were one magnifying of his office. Mark his object—to win souls!—to execute the will of God! As the man rises in his own esteem, his office sinks; but, as the office rises in his view, the man falls. He must be in constant hostility with himself, if he would magnify his office. He must hold himself in readiness to make sacrifices, when called to do so: he will not barter his office, like Balaam; but will refuse to sell his service, like Micaiah. Like Ezra and Nehemiah, he will refuse to come down from the great work which he has to do. He may be calumniated, but he will avoid hasty vindications of his character. It does not appear that Elisha sent after Naaman to vindicate himself from the falsehoods of Gehazi. There appears to me much true dignity in this conduct. I fear I should have wanted paticnce to act thus.

Some young ministers have been greatly injured by taking up their creed from a sort of second or third-rate writers. Toplady, perhaps, has said that he has found his preaching most successful when it has turned on the grand doctrines of Calvinism. A young man admires Toplady, and adopts the same notion concerning his own ministry. But let him turn to a master on the subject. He will find such a man as Traill handling the sovereignty of God, and such high points of doctrine, with a holy and heavenly sweetness, which, while it renders it almost impossible not to receive his sentiments, leaves nothing on the mind but a religious savour.

The grand aim of a minister must be the exhibition of gospel truth. Statesmen may make the greatest blunders in the world, but that is not his affair. Like a king's messenger, he must not stop to take care of a person fallen down: if he can render any kindness consistently with his duty, he will do it; if not, he will prefer his office.

Our method of preaching is not that by which Christianity was propagated; yet the genius of Christianity is not changed. There was nothing in the primitive method set or formal. The primitive bishop stood up and read the gospel or some other portion of Scripture, and pressed on the hearers, with great earnestness and affection, a few plain and forcible truths evidently resulting from that portion of the Divine Word: we take a text and make an oration. Edification was then the object of both speaker and hearers; and, while this continues to be the object, no better method can be found. A parable, or history, or passage of Scripture, thus illustrated and enforced, is the best method of introducing truth to any people who are ignorant of it, and of setting it home with power on those who know it; and not formal, doctrinal, argumentative discourses. Truth and sympathy are the soul of an efficacious ministry.

The Puritans were still farther removed from the primitive method of preaching: they would preach fifteen or sixteen sermons on a text. A primitive bishop would have been shocked with one of our sermons; and, such is our taste, we should be shocked with his. They brought forward Scripture: we bring for-

ward our statements. They directed all their observations to throw light on Scripture: we quote Scripture to throw light on our observations. More faith and more grace would make us better preachers; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Chrysostom's was the right method. Leighton's Lectures on Peter approach very near to this method.

In acting on matter, the art of man is mighty. The steam-engine is a mighty machine. But, in religion, the art of man is mere feebleness. The armour of Saul is armour in the camp of the Israelites, or in the camp of the Philistines—but we want the sling and the stone. I honour metaphysicians, logicians, critics, and historians—in their places. Look at facts. Men, who lay out their strength in statements, preach churches empty. Few men have a wisdom so large as to see that the way which they cannot attain may yet be the best way. I dare not tell most academical, logical, frigid men how little I account of their opinion concerning the true method of preaching to the popular ear. I hear them talk, as utterly incompetent judges. Such men would have said St Paul was fit only for the Tabernacle. What he would have said they were fit for, I cannot tell. They are often great men—first-rate men—unequalled men—in their class and sphere; but it is not their sphere to manage the world.

If a minister could work miracles, he would do little more than interest the curiosity of men. "I want to eat, and I want to drink, and I do it. I get on with

difficulty enough, as things are; and you talk about treating with heaven. I know nothing of the matter, and I want no such thing." This is the language of man's heart. A future thing! An indefinitely future thing! No! if a man could even authoritatively declare, that the day of judgment would be this day seven years, he would have little influence on mankind. Very few would be driven from the play-house —very few from the gaming-table—very few from the brothel. The din on 'Change would be very little diminished. I frequently look back on the early periods of my life, and imagine myself treating with such a character as I know I then was. I say to myself, "What now can I possibly say, that will affect and interest that young fellow of eighteen?"

Some Christian ministers fail in their effect on their hearers, by not entering as philosophers into the state of human nature. They do not consider how low the patient is reduced—that he is to be treated more as a child—that he is to have milk administered to him, instead of strong meat. They set themselves to plant principles and prove points, when they should labour to interest the heart. But, after all, men will carry their natural character into their ministry. If a man has a dry, logical, scholastic turn of mind, we shall rarely find him an interesting preacher. One in a thousand may meet him, but not more.

The Christian will sometimes be brought to walk in a solitary path. God seems to cut away his props, that

he may reduce him to Himself. His religion is to be felt as a personal, particular, appropriate possession. He is to feel, that, as there is but one Jehovah to him, so there seems to him as though there were but one penitent in the universe to be blessed by Him. Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre was brought to this state. She might have said, "I know not where Peter is; he is gone away—perhaps into the world—perhaps to weep over his fall. I know not where John is. What are the feelings and states of my brethren, I know not. I am left here alone. No one accompanies and strengthens me. But, if none other will seek my Lord, yet will I seek him!" There is a commanding energy in religious sympathy. A minister, for example, while his preaching seems effective, and life and feeling show themselves around him, moves on with ease and pleasure. But there is much of the man here. If God change the scene—if discouragements meet him—if he seem to be laid by, in any measure, as an instrument—if the love of his hearers to his person and ministry decay—this is a severe trial; yet most of us need this trial, that we may be reduced simply to God, and may feel that the whole affair is between him and ourselves. A dead fish will swim with the stream, whatever be its direction; but a living one will not only resist the stream, but, if it chooses, it can swim against it. The soul that lives from God, will seek God, and follow God—more easily and pleasantly, indeed, if the stream flow toward the point whither God leads; but still it will follow God as its sole rest and centre, though the stream of men and opinions would hurry it away from Him.

Gravity is doubtless obligatory on ministers. The apostle connects it with sincerity; yet it must be natural—not affected. Some men give everything in an oracular style: this looks like affectation, and will disgust others: they will attribute it to religion, but this is not a sanctified gravity. Other men are always disposed to levity—not that a man of original fancy is to be condemned for thinking in his own way, but the minister must consider that he is a man of a consecrated character. If it should not be difficult to himself to make transitions from levity to gravity, it will be difficult to carry others with him therein. Who has not felt, if God brings him into a trying situation, in which he sees that it is an awful thing to suffer or to die, that gravity is then natural? everything else is offensive! That, too, is evil which lets down the tone of a company: when a minister loses his gravity, the company will take liberties with him. Yet, with a right principle, we must not play the fool. Gravity must be natural and simple. There must be urbanity and tenderness in it. A man must not formalise on everything. He who formalises on everything is a fool, and a grave fool is perhaps more injurious than a light fool.

We are called to build a spiritual house. One workman is not to busy himself in telling another his duty. We are placed in different circumstances, with various talents, and each is called to do what he can. Two men, equally accepted of God, may be exceedingly distinct in the account which they will give of their employ.

ular clergyman can do no more in the discharge than our church requires of him. He may short of her requirements; but he cannot ex- the most devoted life, the duties which she cribed. What man on earth is so pernicious a an idle clergyman!—a man engaged in the ious profession in the world: who rises to eat, k, and lounge, and trifle; and goes to bed, and es again to do the same! Our office is the orious in the world. The mind must be al- the stretch, to acquire wisdom and grace, and unicate them to all who come near. It is leed, when a clergyman of genius and learn- tes himself to the publication of classics and f literature, if he cannot be prevailed on to genius and learning to a more important end. nto this kind of society, what do you hear?— you seen the new edition of Sophocles?"— s a new edition of Sophocles undertaken?"— makes up the conversation, and these are the men who, by profession, should win souls! ed a most useful hint from Dr Bacon, then f the University, when I was at college. I quently to visit him at his living, near Oxford: d say to me, "What are you doing? what are udies?" "I am reading so and so." "You e wrong. When I was young I could turn any Hebrew into Greek verse with ease. But, came into this parish, and had to teach igno- ple, I was wholly at a loss: I had no furniture. ought me a great man, but that was their e; for I knew as little as they did of what it st important to them to know. Study chiefly

what you can turn to good account in your futur
And yet this wise man had not just views of
religion. He was one of those who are for ref
the parish—making the maids industrious, a
men sober and honest; but when I ventured t
"Sir, must not all this be effected by the infusic
divine principle into the mind—a union of th
with the great head of influence?"—"No m
that, no more of that, I pray!"

A wise minister stands between practical Athei
religious enthusiasm.

A sermon that has more head infused i
than heart will not come home with efficacy
hearers. "You must do so and so; such an
consequences will follow if you do not: such an
advantages will result from doing it." This i
dead, and spiritless, when it stands alone, or ever
it is most prominent. Let the preacher's he
stored with wisdom; but, above all, let his he
feel his subject, that he may infuse life and i
into it, by speaking like one who actually possess
feels what he says.

Faith is the master-spring of a minister. "
before me, and thousands of souls shut up th
everlasting agonies. Jesus Christ stands forth t
men from rushing into this bottomless abyss. H
me to proclaim his ability and his love. I w

ı idea!—every fourth idea is contemptible!—
fourth idea is a grand impertinence!"

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e meanness of the earthen vessel, which conveys
hers the gospel treasure, takes nothing from the
of the treasure. A dying hand may sign a deed
ft of incalculable value. A shepherd's boy may
out the way to a philosopher. A beggar may be
earer of an invaluable present.

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writer of sermons has often no idea how many
s he uses, to which the common people affix either
ıeaning, or a false one. He speaks, perhaps, of
ıtion to God;" but the people who hear him
no other idea to the word than that of father,
:other, or relative. The preacher must converse
the people, that he may acquire their words and
es.

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sometimes pleases God to disqualify ministers for
work, before he takes them to their reward.
re he gives them wisdom to perceive this, and
to acquiesce in the dispensation—such a close of
onourable life, where the desire to be publicly
l survives the power, is a loud amen to all former
rs.

ON

INFIDELITY AND POPERY.

INFIDEL writings are ultimately productive of little or no danger to the Church of God. Nay, we are less at a loss in judging of the wisdom of Providence in permitting them, than we are in judging of many other of its designs. They may shake the simple, humble, spiritual mind; but they are, in the end, the means of enlightening and settling it.

There are but two sorts of people in the world. Some walk "by the light of the Lord;" and all others lie "in the wicked one, in darkness and in the shadow of death." Where there is not an enlightened, simple, humble, spiritual mind, notions and opinions are of little consequence. The impudent and refuted misrepresentations of infidels may turn a dark mind to some other notions and way of thinking; but it is in the dark still. Till a man sees by "the light of the Lord," every change of opinions is only putting a new dress on a dead carcase, and calling it alive.

The grace of God must give simplicity. Wherever that is, it is a security against dangerous error; wherever it is not, erroneous opinions may perhaps less predispose the mind against the truth of God in its lively power on

the soul, than true notions destitute of all life and influence do.

Yet the writings of infidels must be read with caution and fear. There are cold, intellectual, speculative, malignant foes to Christianity. I dare not tamper with such when I am in my right mind. I have received serious injury, for a time, even when my duty has called me to read what they have to say. The daring impiety of Belsham's answer to Wilberforce ruffled the calm of my spirit. I read it over while at Bath, in the autumn of 1798. I waked in pain about two o'clock in the morning; I tried to cheer myself by an exercise of faith on Jesus Christ. I lifted up my heart to him, as sympathising with me, and engaged to support me. Many times have I thus obtained quiet and repose; but now I could lay no hold on him; I had given the enemy an advantage over me; my habit had imbibed poison; my nerves trembled; my strength was gone!—"Jesus Christ sympathise with you, and relieve you! It is all enthusiasm! It is idolatry! Jesus Christ has preached his sermons, and done his duty, and is gone to heaven! And there he is, as other good men are! Address your prayers to the Supreme Being!"—I obtain relief in such cases by dismissing from my thoughts all that enemies or friends can say. I will have nothing to do with Belsham or with Wilberforce. I come to Christ himself. I hear what he says. I turn over the Gospels. I read his conversations. I dwell especially on his farewell discourses with his disciples, in St John's Gospel. If there be meaning in words, and if Christ were not a deceiver or deceived, the reality of the Christian's life, in him and from him, by faith, is written there as with a sunbeam.

This temptation besets me to this day, and I know not that I have any other which is so particular in its attacks upon me. I am sometimes restless in bed; and when I find myself so, I generally think that the parenthesis cannot be so well employed as in prayer. While my mind is thus ascending to Christ, and communing with him, it often comes across me, "What a fool art thou to imagine these mental effusions can be known to any other being! what a senseless enthusiast to imagine that the man who was nailed to a cross can have any knowledge of these secrets of thy soul!" On one of these occasions, it struck me with great and commanding evidence, "Why might not St John, in the Isle of Patmos—imprisoned perhaps in a cave—why might not he have said so? Why might not he have doubted whether Christ the crucified could have knowledge of his feelings, when he 'was in the Spirit on the Lord's day?' He had no doubt communion with Christ in the Spirit, before he had those palpable evidences of his presence which immediately followed."

In the permission of certain bold infidel characters and writings, we may discern plain evidences of that awful system of judicial government with which God has been pleased to rule the world. Where there is a moral indisposition, where men are inclined to be deceived, where they are waiting as it were for a leader—there he sends such men or such writings as harden them in their impiety; while a teachable and humble mind will discern the true character of such men or writings, and escape the danger.

I can conceive a character much more pernicious in

its influence than the daring and impudent infidel. A man—in the estimation of all the world modest, amiable, benevolent—who should, with deep concern, lament the obligation under which he feels himself to depart from the religion of Europe, the religion of his country, the religion of his family; and should profess his unfeigned desire to find this religion true, but that he cannot possibly bring his mind to believe it, and that for such and such reasons: when he should thus introduce all the strongest points that can be urged on the subject.

But God governs the world. It is not in his design to permit such men to arise. The infidel has always had something about him which has ascertained his obliquity to the eye that has not been dimmed by the moral indisposition of the heart.

The low and scurrilous writers against revelation carry their own condemnation with them. They are like an ill-looking fellow, who comes into a court of justice to give evidence, but carries the aspect, on the first glance, of a town-bully, ready to swear whatever shall be suggested to him.

Burke has painted the spirit of democracy to the life. I have fallen in with some democrats who knew nothing of me. They have been subjects of great curiosity, when I could forget the horrid display of sin that was before me. I saw a malignant eye—a ferocity—an intensity of mind on their point. Viewed in its temper and tendencies, Jacobinism is devilism—Belialism. It

takes the yoke of God and man, puts it on the ground, and stamps on it. Every man is called out into exertion against it. It is an inveterate, malignant, blaspheming, atheistical, fierce spirit. It seems a toss-up with these men whether Satan himself shall govern the world. Before such men I say not a word. Our Master has commanded us "not to cast pearls before swine." I am vastly delighted with character—true and original character; but this is an awful and affecting display of it.

The Church has endured a pagan and a papal persecution. There remains for her an *infidel* persecution —general, bitter, purifying, cementing.

It is perhaps impossible, in the very nature of things, that such another scheme as Popery could be invented. It is, in truth, "the mystery of iniquity," that it should be able to work itself into the simple, grand, sublime, holy institution of Christianity, and so to interweave its abominations with the truth as to occupy the strongest passions of the soul, and to control the strongest understandings! While Pascal can speak of Popery as he does, its influence over the mass of the people can excite no surprise. Those two master principles—that we must believe as the Church ordains, and that there is no salvation out of this Church—oppose, in the ignorance and fear which they beget, an almost insuperable barrier against the truth.

I have not such expectations of a millennium as

many entertain, yet I believe that the figures and expressions of prophecy have never received their accomplishment. They are too grand and ample to have been fulfilled by any state which the church has hitherto seen. Christianity has yet had no face suitable to its dignity. It has savoured hitherto too much of man—of his institutions, of his prejudices, of his follies, of his sin. It must be drawn out, depicted, exhibited, demonstrated to the world. Its chief enemies have been the men by whom, under the profession of "Hail, Master!" it has been distorted, abused, and vilified.

Popery was the master-piece of Satan. I believe him utterly incapable of such another contrivance. It was a systematic and infallible plan for forming manacles and mufflers for the human mind. It was a well-laid design to render Christianity contemptible, by the abuse of its principles and its institutions. It was formed to overwhelm—to enchant—to sit as "the great whore, making the earth drunk with her fornications."

The infidel conspiracy approaches nearest to Popery; but infidelity is a suicide. It dies by its own malignity. It is known and read of all men. No man was ever injured essentially by it, who was fortified with a small portion of the genuine spirit of Christianity—its contrition and its docility. Nor is it one in its efforts: its end is one, but its means are disjointed, various, and often clashing. Popery debases and alloys Christianity; but infidelity is a furnace wherein it is purified and refined. The injuries done to it by Popery will be repaired by the very attacks of infidelity.

In the meantime, Christianity wears an enchanting

form to all who can penetrate through the mists thrown round it by its false friends and its avowed foes. The exiled French priest raises the pity and indignation of all Christians, while he describes the infernal plots of the infidel conspirators against Christianity, and shows them in successful operation against his Church.* We seem for a while to forget her errors, and we view her for the moment only so far as she possesses Christianity in common with ourselves; but, when he charges the origin of this infidel conspiracy on the principles asserted by the Waldenses or the Church of Geneva, the enchantment dissolves. We see that he is under the influence of a sophism, by which, having imposed upon himself, he would impose upon others. With him Christianity and his Church mean one and the same thing. A separation from his Church is a separation from Christianity; and proceeds on principles which lead necessarily, if pursued to their issues, to every abomination of infidelity. But let him know that the Church of Geneva protested against the false friend of Christianity, and that, if the avowed enemy of Christianity had then elevated himself, she would have protested with equal zeal against him. Let him know, that if his Church had listened to the voice of the Reformer, the enemy of Christianity would have wanted ground for footing to his attacks. The Papist falsely charges the Reformer as the father of infidelity; the infidel maliciously confounds Popery and Christianity; but the true Christian is as far from the licentiousness of the infidel as he is from the corruption of the Papist.

I am not inclined to view things in a gloomy aspect.

* Alluding to Barruel's Memoirs of Jacobinism.

Christianity must undergo a renovation. If God has sent his Son, and has declared that he will exalt him on his throne—the earth and all that it inherit are contemptible in the view of such a plan! If this be God's design—proceed it does, and proceed it will. Christianity is such a holy and spiritual affair, that perhaps all human institutions are to be destroyed to make way for it. Men may fashion things as they will; but, if there is no effusion of the Spirit of God on their institutions, they will remain barren and lifeless. Many Christians appear to have forgotten this.

ON

A CHRISTIAN'S DUTY

IN THESE EVENTFUL TIMES.

Ours is a period of no common kind. The path of duty to a Christian is now unusually difficult. It seems to me, however, to be comprehended in two words—Be quiet and useful. The precept is short; but the application of it requires much grace and wisdom. Take not a single step out of a quiet obscurity, to which you are not compelled by a sense of utility.

Two parties have divided the world.

The Jacobins are desperadoes: the earth's torment and plague. Bishop Horsley said well of them lately, from the pulpit, "These are they who have poisoned Watts' Hymns for Children. These are they who are making efforts to contaminate every means of access to the public mind. And what is their aim? What are their pretensions? That they will have neither Lord nor King over them. But, verily, one is their king, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is 'Abaddon;' but in the Greek tongue he is called 'Apollyon;' and in plain English—'The Devil.' My soul, come not thou near the tents of these wicked men!"

"But the anti-Jacobins?" Their project, as a body, leaves God out of the question. Their proposal is unholy. I cannot be insensible to the security, order, and liberty, with which these kingdoms are favoured above all other nations; but I cannot go forth with these men, as one of their party. I cannot throw up my hat and shout, "Huzza!" Woe to the world, if even they prevail!

The world is a lying, empty pageant; and these men are ensnared with the show. My part in it, as a Christian, is to act with simplicity as the servant of God. What does God bid me do? What, in this minute of time, which will be gone and carry me with it into eternity—what is my path of duty? While enemies blaspheme, and friends are beguiled, let me "stand on my watch-tower," with the prophet, "listening what the Lord God shall say to me." In any scheme of man I dare not be drunken. "We who are of the day must be sober." Churchman or Dissenter, if I am a true Christian, I shall talk thus to my connections. The sentiment of the multitude is ensnaring; but the multitude is generally wrong. I must beware of the contagion. Not that I am to push myself into consequence. The matter is between me and my God—not one step out of a holy quiet and obscurity, but in order to utility.

Yet we must be active and bold whenever duty calls us to be so. My own conduct, with respect to the religious world, is too much formed on my feelings. I see it in what I deem a lamentable state; but I seem to say, "Well! go on talking, and mistaking, and making a noise; only make not a noise here:" and then I retire into my closet, and shrink within myself. But,

had I more faith, and simplicity, and love, and self-denial, I might do all I do in my present sphere, but I should throw myself in the midst of them, and entreat, and argue, and remonstrate.

But then such a man must give himself up as a sacrifice. He would be misrepresented and calumniated from many quarters. But he would make up his account for such treatment. How would St Paul have acted in such a state of the Church? Would he not have displayed that warm spirit, which made him say, "O foolish Galatians! who hath bewitched you?" and that holy self-denial, which dictated, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more exceedingly I love you, the less I be loved?"

It is not to be calculated how much a single man may effect who throws his whole powers into a thing. Who, for instance, can estimate the influence of Voltaire? He shed an influence of a peculiar sort over Europe. His powers were those of a gay buffoon—far different from those of Hume, and others of his class—but he threw himself wholly into them. It is true, these men meet the wickedness or the imbecility of the human mind; but there are many right-hearted people who hang a long time on the side of pure, silent, simple religion. Let a man, who sees things as I do, throw himself out with all his powers, to rescue and guide such persons.

ON FORTIFYING YOUTH

AGAINST

INFIDEL PRINCIPLES.

I NEVER gathered from infidel writers, when an avowed infidel myself, any solid difficulties, which were not brought to my mind by a very young child of my own. "Why was sin permitted?"—"What an insignificant world is this to be redeemed by the incarnation and death of the Son of God!"—"Who can believe that so few will be saved?"—Objections of this kind, in the mind of reasoning young persons, prove to me that they are the growth of fallen nature.

The nurse of infidelity is sensuality. Youth are sensual. The Bible stands in their way. It prohibits the indulgence of "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." But the young mind loves these things; and therefore it hates the Bible which prohibits them. It is prepared to say, "If any man will bring me arguments against the Bible, I will thank him; if not, I will invent them."

As to infidel arguments, there is no weight in them. They are jejune and refuted. Infidels are not themselves convinced by them.

In combating this evil in youth, we must recollect the proverb, that "a man may bring his horse to the water, but cannot make him drink." The minds of the young are preoccupied. They will not listen. Yet a crisis may come. They will stop, and bethink themselves.

One promising method with them is, to appeal to facts. What sort of men are infidels? They are loose, fierce, overbearing men. There is nothing in them like sober and serious inquiry. They are the wildest fanatics on earth. Nor have they agreed among themselves on any scheme of truth and felicity. Contrast with the character of infidels that of real Christians.

It is advantageous to dwell, with youth, on the need and necessities of man. "Every pang and grief tells a man that he needs a helper; but infidelity provides none. And what can its schemes do for you in death?"

Impress them with a sense of their ignorance. I silence myself many times a day, by a sense of my own ignorance.

Appeal to their consciences. "Why is it that you listen to infidelity? Is not infidelity a low, carnal, wicked game? Is it not the very picture of the prodigal—'Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me?'" The question why infidelity is received, exposes it, and shows it to the light. Why, why will a man be an infidel? Your children may urge difficulties; but tell them that inexplicable difficulties surround you; you are compelled to believe, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, whether you will or no; and shall you not be a believer in the hundredth instance from choice?

w out a map of the road of infidelity. It will
ıem to such stages, at length, as they never could
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ı my own case, I said, "My father is right,
am wrong! 'Oh, let me die the death of the
ɔus, and let my last end be like his!'" The bye-
sations in a family are, in this view, of unspeak-
ıportance.

the whole, arguments addressed to the heart
nore forcibly than those addressed to the head.
I was a child, and a very wicked one too, one of
'atts' hymns sent me to weep in a corner. The
n Janeway's Token had the same effect. I felt
fluence of faith in suffering Christians. The cha-
of young Samuel came home to me, when no-
else had any hold on my mind.

ON THE

MANAGEMENT OF CHILDREN.

GREAT wisdom is requisite in correcting the evils of children. A child is bashful, perhaps: but, in stimulating this child, we are too apt to forget future consequences. "Hold up your head. Don't be vulgar." At length they hold up their heads, and acquire such airs, that, too late we discover our error. We forgot that we were giving gold to purchase dross. We forgot that we were sacrificing modesty and humility to make them young actors and old tyrants.*

* The reader cannot but admire the sentiments which Bishop Hurd has, on this subject, put into the mouth of Mr Locke, one of his supposed interlocutors in the Dialogue on Foreign Travel.

"Bashfulness is not so much the effect of an ill education, as the proper gift and provision of wise nature. Every stage of life has its own set of manners, that is suited to it, and best becomes it. Each is beautiful in its season; and you might as well quarrel with the child's rattle, and advance him directly to the boy's top, and spanfarthing, as expect from diffident youth the manly confidence of riper age.

"Lamentable in the mean time, I am sensible, is the condition of my good lady; who, especially if she be a mighty well-bred one, is perfectly shocked at the boy's awkwardness; and calls out on the tailor, the dancing-master, the player, the travelled tutor, anybody, and everybody, to relieve her from the pain of so disgraceful an object.

Christians are imbibing so much of the cast and temper of the age, that they seem to be anxiously tutoring their children, and preparing them by all manner of means, not for a better world, but for the present. Yet in nothing should the simplicity of faith be more unreservedly exercised than with regard to children. Their appointments and stations, yea, even their present and eternal happiness or misery, so far as they are influenced by their states and conditions in life, may be decided by the most minute and trivial events, all of which are in God's hands, and not in ours. An unbelieving spirit pervades, in this respect, too intimately the Christian world.

When I meet children to instruct them, I do not suffer one grown person to be present. The Moravians pursue a different method. Some of their elder brethren even sit among the children, to sanction and encourage the work. This is well, provided children are to be addressed in the usual manner. But that will effect little good. Nothing is easier than to talk to children, but to talk to them as they ought to be talked to is the very last effort of ability. A man must have a vigorous

"She should, however, be told, if a proper season and words soft enough could be found to convey the information, that the odious thing which disturbs her so much, is one of nature's signatures impressed on that age; that bashfulness is but the passage from one season of life to another; and that the body is then the least graceful when the limbs are making their last efforts and hastening to their just proportion, so the manners are least easy and disengaged when the mind, conscious and impatient of its imperfections, is stretching all its faculties to their full growth."

See Bishop Hurd's Moral and Political Dialogues, ed. 6th.—London 1788, vol. iii., pp. 99, 100, 101.

imagination; he must have extensive knowledge, to call in illustrations from the four corners of the earth; for he will make little progress but by illustration. It requires great genius to throw the mind into the habit of children's minds. I aim at this, but I find it the utmost effort of ability. No sermon ever put my mind half so much on the stretch. The effort is such, that, were one person present who was capable of weighing the propriety of what I said, it would be impossible for me to proceed. The mind must, in such cases, be perfectly at ease: it must not have to exert itself under cramps and fetters. I am surprised at nothing which Dr Watts did, but his hymns for children. Other men could have written as well as he, in his other works; but how he wrote these hymns, I know not. Stories fix children's attention. The moment I begin to talk in anything like an abstract manner, the attention subsides. The simplest manner in the world will not make way to children's minds for abstract truths. With stories I find I could rivet their attention for two or three hours.

Children are very early capable of impression. I imprinted on my daughter the idea of faith at a very early age. She was playing one day with a few beads, which seemed to delight her wonderfully. Her whole soul was absorbed in her beads. I said, "My dear, you have some pretty beads there." "Yes, papa!" "And you seem to be vastly pleased with them." "Yes, papa!" "Well now, throw them behind the fire." The tears started into her eyes. She looked earnestly at me, as though she ought to have a reason

for such a cruel sacrifice. "Well, my dear, do as you please; but you know I never told you to do anything which I did not think would be good for you." She looked at me a few moments longer, and then—summoning up all her fortitude—her breast heaving with the effort—she dashed them into the fire. "Well," said I, "there let them lie: you shall hear more about them another time; but say no more about them now." Some days after, I bought her a box full of larger beads and toys of the same kind. When I returned home, I opened the treasure and set it before her—she burst into tears with ecstasy. "Those, my child," said I, "are yours, because you believed me, when I told you it would be better for you to throw those two or three paltry beads behind the fire. Now, that has brought you this treasure. But now, my dear, remember, as long as you live, what faith is. I did all this to teach you the meaning of faith. You threw your beads away when I bid you, because you had faith in me that I never advised you but for your good. Put the same confidence in God. Believe everything that he says in his Word. Whether you understand it or not, have faith in him that he means your good."

ON

FAMILY WORSHIP.

FAMILY religion is of unspeakable importance. Its effect will greatly depend on the sincerity of the head of the family, and on his mode of conducting the worship of his household. If his children and servants do not see his prayers exemplified in his tempers and manners, they will be disgusted with religion. Tediousness will weary them. Fine language will shoot above them. Formality of connection or composition in prayer they will not comprehend. Gloominess or austerity of devotion will make them dread religion as a hard service. Let them be met with smiles; let them be met as friends; let them be met as for the most delightful service in which they can be engaged; let them find it short, savoury, simple, plain, tender, heavenly. Worship thus conducted may be used as an engine of vast power in a family. It diffuses a sympathy through the members. It calls off the mind from the deadening effect of worldly affairs. It arrests every member with a morning and evening sermon, in the midst of all the hurries and cares of life. It says, "There is a God!" "There is a spiritual world!"

"There is a life to come!" It fixes the idea of responsibility in the mind. It furnishes a tender and judicious father or master with an opportunity of gently glancing at faults, where a direct admonition might be inexpedient. It enables him to relieve the weight with which subordination or service often sits on the minds of inferiors.

In my family worship I am not the reader, but employ one of my children. I make no formal comment on the Scriptures; but, when any striking event or sentiment arises, I say, "Mark that!"—"See how God judges of that thing!" Sometimes I ask what they think of the matter, and how such a thing strikes them. I generally receive very strange and sometimes ridiculous answers, but I am pleased with them; attention is all alive, while I am explaining wherein they err, and what is the truth. In this manner I endeavour to impress the spirit and scope of the passage on the family.

I particularly aim at the eradication of a false principle, wonderfully interwoven with the minds of children and servants—they take their standard from the neighbourhood and their acquaintance, and by this they judge of everything. I endeavour to raise them to a persuasion that God's will in Scripture is the standard, and that this standard is perpetually in opposition to that corrupt one around and before them.

The younger children of the family will soon have discernment enough to perceive that the Bible has a holiness about it that runs directly contrary to the stream of opinion. And then, because this character is so evident and so inseparable from the Scripture, the heart will distaste and reject it; yet the standard

must be preserved. If a man should lower it, they would soon detect him, and he must, after all, raise them up to the right standard again. Much may be effected by manner as to impressing truth; but still truth will remain irksome till God touch the heart.

I read the Scriptures to my family in some regular order, and am pleased to have thus a lesson found for me. I look on the chapter of the day as a lesson sent for that day, and so I regard it as coming from God for the use of that day, and not of my own seeking.

I find it easy to keep up the attention of a congregation in comparison of that of my family. I have found the attention best gained by bringing the truths of Scripture into comparison with the facts which are before our eyes. It puts more *stimuli* into family expositions. I never found a fact lost, or the current news of the day fail of arresting the attention. "How does the Bible account for that fact?—That man murdered his father—This or that thing happened in our house to-day—What does the Scripture say of such things?"

It is difficult to fix and quiet your family. The servants are eager to be gone to do something in hand. There has been some disagreement, perhaps, between them and their mistress. We must seize opportunities—we must not drive hard at such times as these; regularity, however, must be enforced. If a certain hour is not fixed and adhered to, the family will inevitably be found in confusion.

Religion should be prudently brought before a family. The old Dissenters wearied their families. Jacob reasoned well with Esau about the tenderness of his children and his flocks and herds. Something

gentle, quiet, moderate, should be our aim. There should be no scolding; it should be mild and pleasant.

I avoid absolute uniformity; the mind revolts at it; though I would shun eccentricity, for that is still worse. At one time I would say something on what is read; but at another time nothing. I make it as natural as possible; "I am a religious man; you are my children and my servants; it is natural that we should do so and so."

Nothing of superstition should attach to family duty. It is not absolutely and in all cases indispensable. If unavoidably interrupted, we omit it; it is well. If I were peremptorily ordered, as the Jews were, to bring a lamb, I must be absolute. But this service is my liberty, not my task. I do not, however, mean in any degree to relax the proper obligation.

Children and servants should see us acting on the Psalmist's declaration, "I will speak of thy testimonies before kings." If a great man happens to be present, let them see that I deem him nothing before the Word of God!

ON THE INFLUENCE OF

THE PARENTAL CHARACTER.

The influence of the parental character on children is not to be calculated. Every thing around has an influence on us. Indeed, the influence of things is so great that, by familiarity with them, they insensibly urge us on principles and feelings which we before abhorred. I knew a man who took in a democratical paper, only to laugh at it. But at length he had read the same things again and again, so often, that he began to think there must be some truth in them; and that men and measures were really such as they were so often said to be. A drop of water seems to have no influence on the stone; but it will in the end wear its way through. If there be, therefore, such a mighty influence in every thing around us, the parental influence must be great indeed.

Consistency is the great character, in good parents, which impresses children. They may witness much temper; but if they see their father "keep the even tenor of his way," his imperfections will be understood and allowed for as reason opens. The child will see and reflect on his parent's intention; and this will

have great influence on his mind. This influence may, indeed, be afterwards counteracted; but that only proves that contrary currents may arise, and carry the child another way. Old Adam may be too strong for young Melancthon.

The implantation of principles is of unspeakable importance, especially when culled from time to time out of the Bible. The child feels his parent's authority supported by the Bible, and the authority of the Bible supported by his parent's weight and influence. Here are data—fixed data. A man can very seldom get rid of these principles. They stand in his way. He wishes to forget them, perhaps; but it is impossible.

Where parental influence does not convert, it hampers. It hangs on the wheels of evil. I had a pious mother who dropped things in my way. I could never rid myself of them. I was a professed infidel; but then I liked to be an infidel in company, rather than when alone. I was wretched when by myself. These principles, and maxims, and data, spoiled my jollity. With my companions I could sometimes stifle them: like embers, we kept one another warm. Besides, I was here a sort of hero. I had beguiled several of my associates into my own opinions, and I had to maintain a character before them. But I could not divest myself of my better principles. I went with one of my companions to see "The Minor." He could laugh heartily at Mother Cole—I could not. He saw in her the picture of all who talked about religion—I knew better. The ridicule on regeneration was high sport to him—to me it was none; it could not move my features. He knew no difference between regeneration and transubstantiation—I did. I knew there was such a thing.

I was afraid and ashamed to laugh at it. Parental influence thus cleaves to a man; it harasses him—it throws itself continually in his way.

I find in myself another evidence of the greatness of parental influence. I detect myself to this day in laying down maxims in my family, which I took up at three or four years of age, before I could possibly know the reason of the thing.

It is of incalculable importance to obtain a hold on the conscience. Children have a conscience; and it is not seared though it is evil. Bringing the eternal world into their view—planning and acting with that world before us—this gains, at length, such a hold on them, that, with all the infidel poison which they may afterward imbibe, there are few children who, at night—in their chamber—in the dark—in a storm of thunder—will not feel. They cannot cheat like other men. They recollect that eternity which stands in their way. It rises up before them, like the ghost of Banquo to Macbeth. It goads them; it thunders in their ears. After all, they are obliged to compound the matter with conscience, if they cannot be prevailed on to return to God without delay. "I must be religious, one time or other; that is clear. I cannot get rid of this thing. Well! I will begin at such a time. I will finish such a scheme, and then!"

The opinions, the spirit, the conversation, the manners of the parent, influence the child. Whatever sort of man he is, such, in a great degree, will be the child, unless constitution or accident give him another turn. If the parent is a fantastic man, if he is a genealogist, knows nothing but who married such an one and who married such an one,—if he is a sensualist, a low wretch,

his children will usually catch these tastes. If he is a literary man, his very girls will talk learnedly. If he is a griping, hard, miserly man, such will be his children. This I speak of as generally the case. It may happen that the parent's disposition may have no ground to work on in that of the child: it may happen that the child may be driven into disgust; the miser, for instance, often implants disgust, and his son becomes a spendthrift.

After all, in some cases, perhaps, every thing seems to have been done and exhibited by the pious parent in vain. Yet he casts his bread upon the waters; and, perhaps, after he has been in his grave twenty years, his son remembers what his father told him.

Besides, parental influence must be great, because God has said that it shall be so. The parent is not to stand reasoning and calculating. God has said that his character shall have influence.

And this appointment of Providence becomes often the punishment of a wicked man. Such a man is a complete selfist. I am weary of hearing such men talk about their "family," and their "family," they "must provide for their family." Their family has no place in their real regard. They push for themselves. But God says, "No! you think your children shall be so and so; but they shall be rods for your own backs. They shall be your curse; they shall rise up against you." The most common of all human complaints is, parents groaning under the vices of their children. This is all the effect of parental influence.

In the exercise of this influence there are two leading dangers to be avoided.

Excess of severity is one danger. My mother,

on the contrary, would talk to me, and weep as she talked. I flung out of the house with an oath, but wept too when I got into the street. Sympathy is the powerful engine of a mother. I was desperate; I would go on board a privateer. But there are soft moments to such desperadoes. God does not at once abandon them to themselves. There are times when the man says, "I should be glad to return; but I should not like to meet that face!" if he has been treated with severity.

Yet excess of laxity is another danger. The case of Eli affords a serious warning on this subject. Instead of his mild expostulation on the flagrant wickedness of his sons, "Nay, my sons, it is no good report that I hear," he ought to have exercised his authority as a parent and magistrate in punishing and restraining their crimes.

REMARKS ON AUTHORS.

When I look at the mind of Lord Bacon, it seems vast, original, penetrating, analogical, beyond all competition. When I look at his character, it is wavering, shuffling, mean. In the closing scene, and in that only, he appears in true dignity, as a man of profound contrition.

Baxter surpasses perhaps all others in the grand, impressive, and persuasive style. But he is not to be named with Owen as to furnishing the student's mind. He is, however, multifarious, complex, practical.

Clarke has, above all other men, the faculty of lowering the life and spiritual sense of Scripture to such perfection, as to leave it like dry bones, divested of every particle of marrow or oil. South is nearer the truth. He tells more of it, but he tells it with the tongue of a viper, for he was most bitterly set against the Puritans. But there is a spirit and life about him; he must and will be heard. And now and then he darts on us with an unexpected and incomparable stroke.

The modern German writers, and the whole school formed after them, systematically and intentionally confound vice and virtue, and argue for the passions against the morals and institutions of society. There never was a more dangerous book written than one that Mrs Wolstoncroft left imperfect, but which Godwin published after her death. Her "Wrongs of Women" is an artful apology for adultery; she labours to interest the feelings in favour of an adulteress, by making her crime the consequence of the barbarous conduct of a despicable husband, while she is painted all softness and sensibility. Nothing like this was ever attempted before the modern school.

"Some men," said Dr Patten to me, "are always crying Fire! fire!" To be sure, where there is danger, there ought to be affectionate earnestness. Who would remonstrate, coldly and with indifference, with a man about to precipitate himself from Dover cliff, and not rather snatch him forcibly from destruction? Truth, in its living influence on the heart, will show itself in consecratedness and holy zeal. When teachers of religion are destitute of these qualities, the world readily infers that religion itself is a farce. Let us do the world justice. It has very seldom found a considerate, accommodating, and gentle, but withal earnest, heavenly, and enlightened teacher. When it has found such, Truth has received a very general attention. Such a man was Hervey, and his works have met their reward.

Homer approaches nearest of all the heathen poets to

the grandeur of Hebrew poetry. With the theological light of Scripture, he would have wonderfully resembled it.

Hooker is incomparable in strength and sanctity. His first books are wonderful. I do not so perfectly meet him as he advances towards the close.

Loskiel's "Account of the Moravian Missions among the North American Indians" has taught me two things. I have found in it a striking illustration of the uniformity with which the grace of God operates on men. Crantz, in his "Account of the Missions in Greenland," had shown the grace of God working on a man-fish—on a stupid, sottish, senseless creature, scarcely a remove from the fish on which he lived. Loskiel shows the same grace working on a man-devil—a fierce, bloody, revengeful warrior, dancing his infernal war-dance with the mind of a fury. Divine grace brings these men to the same point; it quickens, stimulates, and elevates the Greenlander—it raises him to a sort of new life—it seems almost to bestow on him new senses—it opens his eye, and bends his ear, and rouses his heart; and what it adds, it sanctifies. The same grace tames the high spirit of the Indian—it reduces him to the meekness, and docility, and simplicity of a child. The evidence arising to Christianity from these facts is perhaps seldom sufficient, by itself, to convince the gainsayer; but, to a man who already believes, it greatly strengthens the reason of his belief. I have seen also in these books, that, the fish-boat, and the oil, and the tomahawk,

"Have you read my key to the Romans?" said Dr Taylor of Norwich, to Mr Newton. "I have turned it over!" "You have turned it over! And is this the treatment a book must meet with, which has cost me many years of hard study? Must I be told at last that you have 'turned it over,' and then thrown it aside? You ought to have read it carefully, and weighed deliberately what comes forward on so serious a subject." "Hold! You have cut me out full employment if my life were to be as long as Methuselah's. I have somewhat else to do in the short day allotted me than to read whatever any one may think it his duty to write. When I read, I wish to read to good purpose; and there are some books which contradict on the very face of them what appear to me to be first principles. You surely will not say I am bound to read such books? If a man tells me he has a very elaborate argument to prove that two and two make five, I have something else to do than to attend to this argument. If I find the first mouthful of meat which I take from a fine-looking joint on my table is tainted, I need not eat through it to be convinced I ought to send it away."

I never read any sermons so much like Whitefield's manner of preaching as Latimer's. You see a simple mind, uttering all its feelings, and putting forth every thing as it comes, without any reference to books or men, with a *naiveté* seldom equalled.

I admired Witsius' "Economy of the Covenants," but not so much as many persons. There is too much

ystem. I used to study commentators and systems; ut I am come almost wholly at length to the Bible. Commentators are excellent, in general, where there re but few difficulties, but they leave the harder knots till untied. I find in the Bible, the more I read, a rand peculiarity, that seems to say to all who attempt systematise it, "I am not of your kind. I am not menable to your methods of thinking. I am untractble in your hands. I stand alone. The great and rise shall never exhaust my treasures. By figures and arables I will come down to the feelings and undertandings of the ignorant. Leave me as I am, but study ne incessantly." Calvin's Institutes are, to be sure, reat and admirable, and so are his commentaries; but after all, if we must have commentators—as we certainly must—Poole is incomparable, and I had almost aid, abundant of himself.

Young is, of all other men, one of the most striking xamples of the disunion of piety from truth. If we ead his most true, impassioned, and impressive estinate of the world and of religion, we shall think it mpossible that he was uninfluenced by his subject. It s, however, a melancholy fact, that he was hunting after preferment at eighty years old, and felt and spoke ike a disappointed man. The truth was pictured on his mind in most vivid colours. He felt it while he was writing; he felt himself on a retired spot; and he saw death, the mighty hunter, pursuing the unthinking world. He saw redemption, its necessity and its granleur; and while he looked on it, he spoke as a man would speak whose mind and heart are deeply engaged.

Notwithstanding all this, the view did not reach h
heart. Had I preached in his pulpit with the fervo
and interest that his "Night Thoughts" discover, I
would have been terrified. He told a friend of mi
who went to him under religious fears, that he must g
more into the world!

MISCELLANEOUS

REMARKS ON THE SCRIPTURES.

I AM an entire disciple of Butler. He calls his book "Analogy;" but the great subject from beginning to end is human ignorance. Berkeley has done much to reduce man to a right view of his attainments in real knowledge; but he goes too far: he requires a demonstration of self-evident truths: he requires to demonstrate that that table is before me. Beattie has well replied to this error, in his "Immutability of Truth;" though it pleased Mr Hume to call that book—"Philosophy for the Ladies."

Metaphysicians seem born to puzzle and confound mankind. I am surprised to hear men talk of their having demonstrated such and such points. Even Andrew Baxter, one of the best of these metaphysicians, though he reasons and speculates well, has not demonstrated to my mind one single point by his reasonings. They know nothing at all on the subject of moral and religious truth beyond what God has revealed. I am so deeply convinced of this, that I can sit by and smile at the fancies of these men; and especially when they fancy they have found out demonstrations. Why, there are demonstrators, who will carry the world before them;

till another man rises, who demonstrates the very opposite, and then, of course, the world follows him!

We are mere mites creeping on the earth, and oftentimes conceited mites too. If any Superior Being will condescend to visit us and teach us, something may be known. "Has God spoken to man?" This is the most important question that can be asked. All ministers should examine this matter to the foundation. Many are culpably negligent herein. But, when this has been done, let there be no more questionings and surmises. My son is not, perhaps, convinced that I am entitled to be his teacher. Let us try. If he finds that he knows more than I do—well: if he finds that he knows nothing, and submits—I am not to renew this conviction in his mind every time he chooses to require me to do so.

If any honest and benevolent man felt scruples in his breast concerning revelation, he would hide them there, and would not move wretched men from the only support which they can have in this world. I am thoroughly convinced of the want of real integrity and benevolence in all infidels. And I am as thoroughly convinced of the want of real belief of the Scriptures, in most of those who profess to believe them.

Metaphysicians can unsettle things, but they can erect nothing. They can pull down a church, but they cannot build a hovel. The Hutchinsonians have said the best things about the metaphysicians. I am no Hutchinsonian; yet I see that they have data, and that there is something worth proving in what they assert.

Principle is to be distinguished from prejudice. The

man who should endeavour to weaken my belief of the truth of the Bible, and of the fair deduction from it of the leading doctrines of religion, under the notion of their being prejudices, should be regarded by me as an assassin. He stabs me in my dearest hopes; he robs me of my solid happiness; and he has no equivalent to offer. This species of evidence of the truth and value of Scripture is within the reach of all men. It is my strongest. It assures me as fully as a voice could from heaven, that my principles are not prejudices. I see in the Bible my heart and the world painted to the life; and I see just that provision made, which is competent to the highest ends and effects on this heart and this world.

The Bible resembles an extensive and highly cultivated garden, where there is a vast variety and profusion of fruits and flowers, some of which are more essential or more splendid than others; but there is not a blade suffered to grow in it which has not its use and beauty in the system. Salvation for sinners, is the grand truth presented every where, and in all points of light; but "the pure in heart" sees a thousand traits of the divine character, of himself, and of the world—some striking and bold, others cast as it were into the shade, and designed to be searched for and examined—some direct, others by way of intimation or inference.

He who reads the Scriptures only in the translation, is but meanly prepared as a public teacher. The habit of reading the Scriptures in the original throws a new

light and sense over numberless passages. The original has, indeed, been obtruded so frequently, and sometimes so absurdly on the hearers, that their confidence in the translation has been shaken. The judicious line of conduct herein is to think with the wise, and talk with the vulgar—to attain, as far as possible, and by all means, the true sense and force of every passage, and, wherever that differs from the received translation, work it in imperceptibly, that the hearers may be instructed while they receive no prejudice against that form in which they enjoy the Scriptures.

No man will preach the gospel so freely as the Scriptures preach it, unless he will submit to talk like an Antinomian, in the estimation of a great body of Christians; nor will any man preach it so practically as the Scriptures, unless he will submit to be called, by as large a body, an Arminian. Many think that they find a middle path; which is, in fact, neither one thing nor another; since it is not the incomprehensible, but grand plan of the Bible. It is somewhat of human contrivance. It savours of human poverty and littleness.

Were the Scriptures required to supply a direct answer to every question, which even a sincere inquirer might ask, it would be impracticable. They form, even now, a large volume. The method of instruction adopted in them is therefore this:—The rule is given—the doctrine is stated—examples [illegible]ought forward—cases in point, which illustr[illegible]nd the doc-

trine; and this is found sufficient for every upright and humble mind.

The simple and unprejudiced study of the Bible is the death of religious extravagance. Many read it under a particular bias of mind. They read books written by others under the same views. Their preaching and conversation run in the same channel. If they could awaken themselves from this state, and come to read the whole Scriptures for every thing which they could find there, they would start as from a dream—amazed at the humble, meek, forbearing, holy, heavenly character of the simple religion of the Scriptures, to which, in a greater or less degree, their eyes had been blinded.

The right way of interpreting Scripture is to take it as we find it, without any attempt to force it into any particular system. Whatever may be fairly inferred from Scripture we need not fear to insist on. Many passages speak the language of what is called Calvinism, and that in almost the strongest terms. I would not have a man clip and curtail these passages, to bring them down to some system: let him go with them in their free and full sense; for, otherwise, if he do not absolutely pervert them, he will attenuate their energy. But let him look at as many more, which speak the language of Arminianism, and let him go all the way with these also. God has been pleased thus to state and to leave the thing; and all our attempts to distort it, one way or the other, are puny and contemptible.

A man may find much amusement in the Bible—variety of prudential instruction—abundance of sublimity and poetry; but if he stops there, he stops short of its great end—for "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The grand secret in the study of the Scriptures is to discover Jesus Christ therein, "the way, the truth, and the life."

In reading the Scriptures, we are apt to think God farther removed from us than from the persons to whom he spake therein: the knowledge of God will rectify this error; as if God could be farther from us than from them. In reading the Old Testament especially, we are apt to think that the things spoken there, in the prophet Hosea, for instance, have little relation to us: the knowledge taught by Christian experience will rectify this error; as if religion were not always the same sort of transaction between God and the soul.

There are two different ways of treating the truths of the gospel—the scientific and the simple. It was seriously given me in charge, when I first entered into the ministry, by a female who attended my church, that I should study Baxter's "Catholic Theology." I did so; but the best idea that I acquired from this labour was, that the most sagacious and subtle men can make out little beyond the plain, obvious, and broad statement of truth in the Scriptures. I should think it a very proper and suitable punishment for a conceited and pragmatical dogmatist, to oblige him to digest that book. Another great truth, indeed, we may gather from it;

and that is, that the intemperate men on either side, are very little aware of the consequences which may be legitimately drawn from their principles. Even Dr Owen has erred. I would not compare him, in this respect, with Baxter; for he has handled his points with far greater wisdom and simplicity: yet he errs *ex abundanti.* He attempts to make out things with more accuracy, and clearness, and system, than the Bible will warrant. The Bible scorns to be treated scientifically. After all your accurate statements it will leave you aground. The Bible does not come round and ask our opinion of its contents. It proposes to us a constitution of grace, which we are to receive though we do not wholly comprehend it. Numberless questions may be started on the various parts of this constitution. Much of it I cannot understand, even of what respects myself; but I am called to act on it. And this is agreeable to analogy. My child will ask me questions on the fitness or unfitness of what I enjoin, but I silence him: "You are not yet able to comprehend this; your business is to believe me, and obey me." But the schoolmen will not be satisfied with this view of things; yet they can make nothing out satisfactorily. They have their *de re* and their *de nomine;* but nothing is gained by these attempts at clearness and nice distinctions. These very accurate men, who think they adjust every thing with precision, cannot agree among one another, and do little else than puzzle plainer minds.

Whatever definitions men have given of religion, I can find none so accurately descriptive of it as this—

that it is such a belief of the Bible as maintains a living influence on the heart. Men may speculate, criticise, admire, dispute about, doubt, or believe the Bible; but the religious man is such because he so believes it, as to carry habitually a practical sense of its truths on his mind.

The fears of the general class of Christians are concerned about the superstructure of religion; but those of speculative minds chiefly relate to the foundation. The less thinking man doubts whether he is on the foundation; he whose mind is of a more intellectual turn, doubts concerning the foundation itself. I have met with many of these speculative cases. Attacks of this nature are generally sudden. A suspicion will, by surprise, damp the heart; and, for a time, will paint the Bible as a fable. I have found it useful on such occasions to glance over the whole thread of Scripture. The whole, presented in such a view, brings back the mind to its proper tone; the indelible characters of simplicity and truth impress with irresistible effect that heart which can discern them as having once felt them.

ON THE OLD AND NEW DISPENSATIONS.

The Old and New Testaments contain but one scheme of religion. Neither part of this scheme can be understood without the other; and, therefore, great er-

rors have arisen from separating them. They are like the rolls on which they were anciently written, before books of the present form were invented. It is but one subject and one system from beginning to end; but the view which we obtain of it grows clearer and clearer, as we unwind the roll that contains it.

There is one grand and striking feature of distinction between the spirit of the Old Testament dispensation and that of the New.

The old dispensation was a dispensation of limits, waymarks, forms, and fashions; everything was weighed and measured. If a man did but gather sticks on the Sabbath, he was to be stoned without mercy; if a Jew brought an offering, it was of no avail if not presented at the door of the tabernacle—the manner, the time, the circumstances, were all minutely instituted; and no devotion or piety of spirit could exempt a man from the yoke of all these observances, for God had appointed these as the way in which he chose that a devout Jew should express his state of mind.

But the new dispensation changed the whole system. Religion was now to become more peculiarly a spiritual transaction between God and the soul; and independent, in a higher measure than ever before, of all positive institutions. Its few simple institutions had no further object than the preservation of the unity, order, soundness, and purity of the Church, in regard to doctrine, government, and discipline.

Nor had these appointments that character of unaccommodating inflexibility, which marked the institutions of the old dispensation. All nations, men of all habits

and manners, are to drink life from the beneficent stream as it flows. It is to throw down no obstructions, that are not absolutely incompatible with its progress. But it is appointed to pervade every place which it visits. Some it enters without obstruction, and passes directly through. In some it meets with mounds and obstacles, yet rises till it finds an entrance. Others are so fenced and fortified, that it winds round them and flows forward: continuing to do so, till it at length finds some method of insinuating itself.

And thus the dispensation of grace in the Church accommodates itself to the various tempers and habits which it finds in different ages, nations, and bodies of men: it leaves in existence numberless opinions and prejudices, if they are not inconsistent with its main design, and mingles and insinuates itself among them. It has not limited Christianity to any one form of church polity, ordained and perfected in all its parts by divine authority; but Christians are left to act herein according to circumstances, and to the exercise of sound discretion under those circumstances.

ON TYPICAL AND ALLEGORICAL EXPLANATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

It might be expected that, when God had determined to send his Son into the world, there would be a train and concatenation of circumstances preparatory to his coming—that the history which declared that he was to come should exhibit many persons and things

which should form a grand preparation for the event, though not so many as an absurd fancy might imagine.

There is a certain class of persons who wish to rid themselves of the types. Sykes insists that even the brazen serpent is called in by our Lord by way of illustration only, and not as a designed type. Robinson of Cambridge, when he began to verge toward Socinianism, began to ridicule the types, and to find matter of sport in the pomegranates and the bells of the high priest's garment. At all events, the subject should not be treated with levity and irreverence; it deserves serious reflection.

With respect to the expediency of employing the types much in the pulpit, that is another question. I seldom employ them. I am jealous for truth and its sanctions. The old dispensation was a typical dispensation, but the new is a dispensation unrolled. When speaking of the typical dispensation, we must admire a master like St Paul; but to us, modesty becomes a duty in treating such subjects in our ministry. Remember, "'This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!' How dreadful if I lead thousands with nonsense!—if I lose the opportunity of impressing solid truths!—if I waste their precious time!"

A minister should say to himself, "I would labour to cut off occasions of objecting to the truth. I would labour to grapple with men's consciences. I would show them that there is no strange twist in our view of religion. I must avoid as much as possible having my judgment called in question: many watch for this, and will avail themselves of any advantage. Some who hear me are thus continually seeking excuses for not

ON THE

DIVERSITY OF CHARACTER IN CHRISTIANS,

AND ON

CORRECTING THE DEFECTS OF OUR CHARACTER.

In discovering and counteracting the defects of our own character, it is of chief importance that we really intend to ascertain the truth.

The intention is extremely defective in us all. The man who thinks he has such honest intention, yet has it very imperfectly. He says, "Touch me; but touch me like a gentleman. Do not intrude on the delicacies of society." The real meaning of which is, that he has no intention of hearing the truth from you. A man who has a wound to be healed, comes to the surgeon with such an intention to get it healed, that, if he suspected his skill or his fidelity, he would seek another.

Intention, or a man's really desiring to know the truth concerning himself, would produce attention. He would soon find that there is little close business in a man who does not withdraw from the world.

He will begin with self-suspicion. "Perhaps I am such or such a man. I see defects in all my friends, and I must be a madman not to suppose that I also have mine. I see defects in my friends, which they

not only do not themselves see, but they will not suffer others to show these defects to them. I must therefore take it for granted that I am a more foolish and pragmatical fellow than I can conceive."

If he begin thus, then he will be willing to proceed a step further,—"Let me try if I cannot reach these defects." I have found out myself by seeing my picture in another man. I would choose men of my own constitution,—other men would give me no proper picture of myself. In such men, I can see actions to be ridiculous or absurd, when I could not have seen them to be so in myself. We may learn some features of our portrait from enemies; an enemy gives a hard feature probably, but it is often a truer likeness than can be obtained from a friend. What with your friend's tenderness for you, and your own tenderness for yourself, you cannot get at the true feature. We should, moreover, encourage our friends. You cannot, in one case in ten, go to a man on a business of this nature without offending him. He will allege such and such excuses for the defect, and fritter it away to nothing. This shows the hypocrisy, the falsehood, the self-love, and the flattery of the heart. This endeavour to conceal or palliate defects, instead of a desire to discover them, grows up with us from infancy. There is something so deceitful in sin! A man is brought *to believe his own lie!* He is so accustomed to hide himself from himself, that he is surprised when another detects and unmasks him. Hazael verily believed himself incapable of becoming what the prophet foretold.

Many motives urge us to attempt a rectification of our defects. Consider the importance of character. He who says he cares not what men think of him, is on a

very low form in the school of experience and wisdom; character and money effect almost every thing. It should be considered, too, how much we have smarted for want of attending to our defects. Nineteen out of twenty of our smarting times arise from this cause.

In counteracting our defects, however, we should be cautious not to blunder by imitation of others. There are such men in the world as saint-errants. One of these men takes up the history of Ignatius Loyola, and nothing seems worthy of his endeavour but to be just such a man, in all the extravagances of his character and conduct. We should search till we find where our character fails, and then amend it, not attempt to become another man.

A wise man, who is seriously concerned to learn the truth respecting himself, will not spurn it even from a fool. The great men who kept fools in their retinue, learnt more truth from them than from their companions. A real self-observer will ask whether there is any truth in what the fool says of him. Nay, a truth that may be uttered in envy or anger, will not lose its weight with him. The man who is determined to find happiness, must bear to have it even beaten into him. No man ever found it by chance, or "yawned it into being with a wish." When I was young, my mother had a servant whose conduct I thought truly wise. A man was hired to brew, and this servant was to watch his method, in order to learn his art. In the course of the process something was done which she did not understand. She asked him, and he abused her with the vilest epithets for her ignorance and stupidity. My mother asked her, when she related it, how she bore such abuse. "I would be called," said she, "worse

names a thousand times for the sake of the information which I got out of him."

If a man would seriously set himself to this work, he must retire from the crowd. He must not live in a bustle. If he is always driving through the business of the day, he will be so in harness as not to observe the road he is going.

He must place perfect standards before his eyes. Every man has his favourite notions; and therefore no man is a proper standard. The perfect standard is only to be found in Scripture. Elijah meets Ahab, and holds up the perfect standard before his eyes, till he shrinks into himself.* I have found great benefit in being sickened and disgusted with the false standards of men. I turn, with stronger convictions, to the perfect standard of God's Word.

He should also "commune with his own heart upon his bed"—"How did I fall, at such or such a time, into my peculiar humours! Had any other man done so, I should have lost my patience with him."

Above all, he must make his defects matter of constant prayer—"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Men are to be estimated, as Johnson says, by the mass of character. A block of tin may have a grain of silver, but still it is tin; and a block of silver may have an alloy of tin, but still it is silver. The mass of Elijah's character was excellence; yet he was not without the alloy. The mass of Jehu's character was base;

* 1 Kings xviii. 17, &c.

yet he had a portion of zeal which was directed by God to great ends. Bad men are made the same use of as scaffolds: they are employed as means to erect a building, and then are taken down and destroyed.

We must make great allowance for constitution. I could name a man, who, though a good man, is more unguarded in his tongue than many immoral persons. Shall I condemn him? He breaks down here, and almost here only. On the other hand, many are so mild and gentle, as to make one wonder how such a character could be formed without true grace entering into its composition.

God has given to every man a peculiar constitution. No man is to say, "I am such or such a man, and I can be no other—such or such is my way, and I am what God made me." This is true, in a sound sense; but, in an unsound sense, it has led men foolishly and wickedly to charge their eccentricities and even their crimes on God. It is every man's duty to understand his own constitution; and to apply to it the rein or the spur, as it may need. All men cannot do, nor ought they to do, all things in the same way, nor even the same things. But there are common points of duty, on which all men of all habits are to meet. The free horse is to be checked, perhaps, up-hill, and the sluggish one to be urged; but the same spirit, which would have exhausted itself before, shows itself probably in resistance down-hill, when he feels the breeching press upon him behind—but he must be whipped out of his resistance.

There is a large class of Christians who want discrimination in religion. They are sound and excellent men, but they are not men of deep experience. They are not men of Owen's, Gilpin's, Rutherford's, Adam's, or Brainerd's school. They have a general, but not a minute acquaintance, with the combat between sin and grace in the heart. I have learnt not to bring deeply experimental subjects before such persons. They cannot understand them, but are likely to be distressed by them. This difference between persons of genuine piety arises from constitution—or from the manner in which the grace of God first met them—or from the nature and degree of temptation through which God has led them. A mind finely constituted, or of strong passions—a mind roused in its sins, rather than one drawn insensibly—a mind trained in a severe school for high services—is generally the subject of this deeply interior acquaintance with religion.

There is a great diversity of character among real Christians. Education, constitution, and circumstances, will fully explain this diversity.

He has seen but little of life who does not discern everywhere the effects of education on men's opinions and habits of thinking. Two children bring out of the nursery that which displays itself throughout their lives. And who is the man that can rise above his dispensation, and can say, "You have been teaching me nonsense?"

As to constitution, look at Martin Luther: we may see the man every day: his eyes, and nose, and mouth attest his character. Look at Melancthon: he is like

a snail with his couple of horns: he puts out his horns and feels—and feels—and feels. No education could have rendered these two men alike. Their difference began in the womb. Luther dashes in saying his things: Melancthon must go round about—he must consider what the Greek says, and what the Syriac says. Some men are born minute men—lexicographers—of a German character; they will hunt through libraries to rectify a syllable. Other men are born keen as a razor: they have a sharp, severe, strong acumen: they cut everything to pieces: their minds are like a case of instruments; touch which you will, it wounds: they crucify a modest man. Such men should aim at a right knowledge of character. If they attained this, they would find out the sin that easily besets them. The greater the capacity of such men, the greater their cruelty. They ought to blunt their instruments. They ought to keep them in a case. Other men are ambitious, fond of power; pride and power give a velocity to their motions. Others are born with a quiet, retiring mind. Some are naturally fierce, and others naturally mild and placable. Men often take to themselves great credit for what they owe entirely to nature. If we would judge rightly, we should see that narrowness or expansion of mind, niggardliness or generosity, delicacy or boldness, have less of merit or demerit than we commonly assign to them.

Circumstances also are not sufficiently taken into the account when we estimate character. For example, we generally censure the Reformers and Puritans as dogmatical, morose, systematic men; but it is easier to walk on a road than to form that road. "Other men laboured, and we have entered into their labours." In

a fine day I can walk abroad, but in a rough and stormy day I should find it another thing to turn coachman and dare all weathers. These men had to bear the burden and heat of the day; they had to fight against hard times—they had to stand up against learning and power. Their times were not like ours: a man may now think what he will, and nobody cares what he thinks. A man of that school was, of course, stiff, rigid, unyielding. Tuckney was such a man; Whichcot was for smoothing things, and walking abroad. We see circumstances operating in many other ways. A minister unmarried, and the same man married, are very different men. A minister in a small parish, and the same man in a large sphere where his sides are spurred and goaded, are very different men. A minister on tenter-hooks, harassed, schooled, and the same man nursed, cherished, put into a hot-house, are very different men. Some of us are hot-house plants; we grow tall—not better, not stronger. Talents are among the circumstances which form the diversity of character. A man of talents feels his own powers, and throws himself into that line which he can pursue with most success. Saurin felt that he could flourish, lighten, thunder, enchant like a magician. Every one should seriously consider how far his talents and turn of mind and circumstances drive him out of the right road. It is an easy thing for a man of vigour to bring a quiet one before his bar, and it is easy for this quiet man to condemn the other, yet both may be really pious men, serving God with their best powers. "Every man has his peculiar gift of God, one after this manner, and the other after that."

ON THE

FALLEN NATURE OF MAN.

I SEEM to acquire little new knowledge on any subject, compared to that which I acquire concerning man. This subject is inexhaustible. I have lately read Colquhon's Treatise on the "Police of the Metropolis," and Barruel's "Memoirs of Jacobinism." When we preachers draw pictures of human nature in the pulpit, we are told that we calumniate it. Calumniate it! Let such censurers read these writers, and confess that we are novices in painting the vices of the heart. All of us live to make discoveries of the evils of the heart—not of its virtues. All our new knowledge of human nature is occupied with its evil.

Bartholomew Fair is one of the most perfect exhibitions of unrestrained human nature in the whole world. The monkey, the tiger, the wolf, the hog, and the goat, are not only to be found in their own, but in human form, with all their savageness, brutality, and filthiness. It displays human nature in its most degraded, ridiculous, and absurd conditions. The tiger may be seen in a quiescent state, if we pass through Dyot Street; he couches there; he blinks. But at Bartholomew Fair he is rampant—vigorous—fierce. Passing

through a fair in a country town, I witnessed a most instructive scene. Two withered, weather-beaten wretches were standing at the door of a show-cart, and receiving twopences from sweet, innocent, ruddy country girls, who paid their money, and dropped their courtesies; while these wretches smiled at their simplicity, and clapped them on the back as they entered the door. What a picture this of Satan! He sets off his shows, and draws in heedless creatures, and takes from them every thing they have good about them! There was a fellow dressed out as a zany, with a hump back and a hump belly, a lengthened nose, and a lengthened chin. To what a depth of degradation must human nature be sunk to seek such resources! I derived more instruction from this scene than I could have done from many elaborate theological treatises.

View man on whatever side we can—in his sensualities, or in his ferocities—in the sins of his flesh, or in the sins of his spirit—catch him when and where you will—his condition is deplorable. While he is sunk in the mass himself, he has no perception of his state; but when he begins to emerge, he looks down with amazement. He sees but little, however, of its abomination, because he has still an affinity with the evil.

Human nature is like the sea, which gains by the flow of the tide in one place what it has lost by the ebb in another. A man may acquiesce in the method which God takes to mortify his pride, but he is in danger of growing proud of the mortification; and so in other cases.

ON

THE NEED OF GRACE.

THERE is something so remarkable in the genius and spirit of the gospel, that it is not to be understood by any force of speculation and investigation. Baxter attempted this method, and found it vain. The state of the heart has the chief influence in the search after truth. Humility, contrition, simplicity, sanctity, these are the handmaids of the understanding in the investigation of religion.

How is it that some men labour in divine things night and day, but labour in vain? How is it that men can turn over the Bible from end to end, to support errors and heresies, absurdities and blasphemies? They take not the Spirit with the Word. A spiritual understanding must be given, a gracious perception, a right taste.

"A very extraordinary thing," said one, "if I, who have read the Bible over and over in the original languages, have studied it day and night, and have written

criticisms and comments on it,—a very extraordinary thing that I should not be able to discover that meaning in the Scriptures, which is said to be so plain that 'a wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err in discovering it!'" And so it is extraordinary till we open this Bible, and there we see the fact explained. The man who approaches the Word of God in his own wisdom shall not find what the fool shall discover under the teaching of divine wisdom; "for it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent;" and "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise."

God in his providence seems to make little account of the measure and contrivances of men in accomplishing his designs. He will do the work, and his hand will be seen in the doing of it. We are obliged to wait for the tide. When that flows, and the wind sets in fair, let us hoist the sails. When the tide has left a ship on the beach, an army may attempt to move it in vain; but when she is floated by the water, a small force moves her. We must wait for openings in providence. In this light I view the darkness of the heathen world. Let us follow every apparent leading of Providence in our endeavours to communicate light to the heathen; but still the opening and the whole work must be of God. Thousands, indeed, hear the gospel, who are no more impressed by it than though they were heathens. The minds of some men will stand as it were a regular blockade, and yet yield to a side-blow—sit unchanged under a searching ministry,

and yet fall beneath a casual word. I know such cases. We might account, indeed, for them, in some measure, as philosophers. The mind, which plants itself against and repels the formal and avowed attacks of the preacher, may be surprised by a hint addressed perhaps to another; yet, after all, the whole work is of God. We may make very little, therefore, of the vehicle. The gospel—the wants of men—the indisposition of the heart—and the mighty power of God—are always and universally the same. By whatever vehicle God conveys that mighty energy which disposes man to find the relief of his wants in the gospel, He still is the worker. It is a divine operation of God's Holy Spirit. If God would raise up heathen princes with the spirit of Peter the Great or Kouli Khan, and send them forth under the powerful influence of Christianity to proselyte their subjects, we might expect the end to be accomplished; but this is a scheme suited to our littleness, and not to Him "whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, and whose ways are not as our ways."

A lady proposed to me a case which seemed to her to decide against those views of religion called evangelical. She knew a most amiable girl, who was respectful and attentive to her parents, and engaging and lovely to all connected with her; who had, however, no objection to seeing a play, and had certainly nothing of that which she knew I should call religion; but she asked if I could believe that God would condemn such a character to everlasting misery. Many persons view things in this way. They set themselves up to dictate to God what should be done on points which he only

can determine. If these persons are ever cured of this evil, it must probably be in some such way as that by which it pleased God to teach Job. Job could assert his integrity and his character against the arguments of his friends; but when God asked, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" Job prostrates his soul with this declaration, "I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Every thinking man will look round him, when he reflects on his situation in this world, and will ask, "What will meet my case? What is it that I want? What will satisfy me? I look at the rich, and I see Ahab, in the midst of all his riches, sick at heart for a garden of herbs! I see Dives, after all his wealth, lifting up his eyes in hell, and begging for a drop of water to cool the rage of his sufferings! I see the rich fool summoned away in the very moment when he was exulting in his hoards! If I look at the wise, I see Solomon, with all his wisdom, acting like a fool; and I know, that, if I possessed all his wisdom, were I left to myself I should act as he did. I see Ahithophel, with all his policy, hanging himself for vexation! If I turn to men of pleasure, I see that the very sum of all pleasure is, that it is Satan's bed into which he casts his slaves! I see Esau selling his birthright for a mess of pottage! I see Solomon, after all his enjoyments, leaving his name a scandal to the Church to the latest age! If I think of honour: take a walk in Westminster Abbey—there is an end of all inquiry. There I

walk among the mighty dead! There is the wi
up of human glory! And what remains of the gı
men of my country? A boasting epitaph! Nc
these things, then, can satisfy me! I must meet
—I must meet judgment—I must meet God—I
meet eternity!"

ON THE OCCASIONS OF

ENMITY AGAINST CHRISTIANITY.

THE cause of enmity against real Christianity is in the heart. The angel Gabriel might exhibit the truth, but the heart would rise in enmity. To suppose that there is any way of preaching the Cross so as not to offend the world, is to know nothing of the subject.

There are many occasions, however, of calling forth this enmity. Any man who should bleed me would put me to pain; but he would greatly aggravate my pain if he rudely tore my skin. Occasions may render the reception of that truth morally impossible, which, under the most favourable circumstances, is received with difficulty.

Ignorance in ministers is an occasion of exciting enmity against Christianity. A man may betray ignorance on almost every subject except the way of salvation. But if others see him to be a fool off his own ground, they will think him a fool on that ground. It is a great error to rail against human learning, so as to imply an undervaluing of knowledge. A man may have little of what is called learning, but he must have knowledge. Bunyan was such a man.

Religious profession was, at first, a conflict—a sacrifice: now it is become a trade. The world sees this spirit pervade many men; and it is a great occasion of enmity. Men of learning and character have confirmed this impression; they have brought out this mischief, and exhibited it to the world. Let any man look into Warburton's "Doctrine of Grace," and he may sit down and wonder that God should suffer such occasions of enmity to arise.

Fanatical times furnish another occasion. The days of Cromwell, for instance. The great enemy of godliness will never want instruments to make the best of such subjects of ridicule. As long as such a book as Butler's "Hudibras" is in the world, it will supply occasions of enmity against real religion.

An unholy, insolent professor of religion occasions enmity. He scorns and insults mankind. His spirit is such as to give them occasion of contemning the truth which he professes. The world will allow some men to call it to account; they will feel a weight of character in a holy and just man.

Eccentricity in religious men is another occasion of enmity. Ask an eccentric man a question, he will stare in your face, and look very spiritual. I knew one of these men, who called out to a farmer as he was passing, "Farmer! what do you know of Jesus Christ?" Much spiritual pride lurks under this conduct. There is want of breeding and good-sense. The world is led to form wrong associations by such characters: "Religion makes a man a fool, or mad: therefore I will not become religious."

Injudicious preaching increases the offence of the Cross. Strange interpretations of Scripture—ludicrous

.risons—silly stories—talking without thinking: are occasions of enmity.

ɜ loose and indiscreet conduct of professing Chris- particularly of ministers, is another occasion. 'orld looks at ministers out of the pulpit, to know they mean when in it.

ostentatious spirit in a professor of religion does injury—that "giving out that he is some great Even a child will often detect this spirit, when ink no one discovers it.

ɜ manner of conducting the devotional part of ; service is sometimes offensive. It is as much as y, "We mean nothing by this service.* Have ıce, and you shall hear me!"

ghting the offence of irregularity has done much . It was a wise reply of a Spanish minister to his : "Omit this affair; it is but a ceremony!" "A ıony! Why, the king is a ceremony!"

od men have given occasion of offence by main- ıg suspicious connections. There is a wide differ- between my not harassing and exposing a doubtful cter, and my endorsing and authenticating him.

ntempt of men's prejudices of education will l. It was not thus with St Paul: "I am made ings to all men, that I might by all means save "

want of the spirit of the Cross in its professors ıses the offence of the Cross—that humility, ıce, and love to souls, which animated Christ he offered himself on the cross for the sins of the l.

ese are some of the stumbling-blocks in the way

* Exod. xii. 26.

of the world. And "woe unto the world," says our Lord, "because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come, but woe unto him by whom the offence cometh!" Every man who is zealous for the diffusion of true religion should keep his eye on all occasions of offence; since religion of itself, and in its own native beauty, has to encounter the natural enmity of the degenerate heart.

ON

RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT.

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is difficult to speak on the subject of religious re-
nent. I am fully persuaded that most religious
esmen are defective in this duty, those especially in
great city. I tell every one of them so with whom
m intimately acquainted, and they all contest the
it with me.

Yet there are some considerations which, in my own
ate judgment concerning the thing, lead me to
k that the religion of a great city is to be viewed
n aspect of its own. I say not this to those men
om I see endangered by the spirit of such a place.
e them an inch, and they will take an ell. But I
n from it to aim at possibilities, and not to bend
bow till it breaks.

say everywhere and to all, "You must hold inter-
se with God, or your soul will die. You must
k with God, or Satan will walk with you. You
st 'grow in grace,' or you will lose it; and you
not do this but by appropriating to this object a due
ion of your time, and diligently employing suitable
ns." But having said this, I leave it. I cannot

limit and define to such men the exact way in which they must apply these principles, but the principles themselves I insist on. What I ought to do myself under my circumstances I know, and what I ought to do were I in trade I seem now to know; but what I really should do were I in trade I know not, and because I know it not I am afraid, in telling another man precisely how he ought to apply this principle, that I should act hypocritically and pharisaically. Stated seasons of retirement ought to be appointed and religiously observed; but the time and the measure of this retirement must be left to a man's own judgment and conscience.

I am restrained from dogmatising on this subject by reflecting on the sort of religion which seems in fact to be best suited to human nature itself, and especially to human nature harassed, worried, loaded, and urged as it is in this great city.

But I am restrained also by another consideration. Difference of character seems to stamp a holy variety on the operation of religious principle. Some men live in a spirit of prayer, who are scarcely able to fix themselves steadily to the solemn act of prayer. Our characters are so much our own, that if a man were to come into my family in order to form himself on my model, and to imitate me for a month, it might seriously injure him. I have a favourite walk of twenty steps in my study and chamber; that walk is my oratory; but if another man were obliged to walk as he prayed, it is very probable he could not pray at all.

In defining the operation of religious principle, I am afraid of becoming an Albert Durer. Albert Durer gave rules for forming the perfect figure of a man. He

marked and defined all the relations and proportions. Albert Durer's man became the model of perfection in every academy in Europe, and now every academy in Europe has abandoned it, because no such figure was ever found in nature. I am afraid of reducing the variety, which to a certain degree may be of God's own forming, to my notion of perfection. "You must maintain and cultivate a spirit of devotion," I say to all; "but be ye judges, as conscientious men, of the particular means suited to your circumstances."

The spirit of devotion should be our great aim. We are indeed buried in sense, and cannot possibly attain or improve this spirit but by proper means, yet these means are to be adapted and varied to character and situation.

"I must walk with God. In some way or other, whatever be my character or profession, I must acquire the holy habit of connecting everything that passes in my house and affairs with God. If sickness or death visit my family, my eye must see and my heart must acknowledge the hand of God therein. Whether my affairs move on smoothly or ruggedly, God must be acknowledged in them. If I go out of my house or come into it, I must go out and come in as under the eye of God. If I am occupied in business all day long, I must still have the glory of God in my view. If I have any affair to transact with another, I must pray that God would be with us in that affair, lest we should blunder, and injure and ruin each other."

This is the language of a real Christian. But, instead of such a spirit as this among the great body of tradesmen professing themselves religious, what do we see but a driving, impetuous pursuit of the world; and

in this pursuit, not seldom, mean, low, suspicious, immoral practices?

Yet I once went to a friend for the express pur of calling him out into the world. I said to him, is your duty to accept the loan of ten thousand pou and to push yourself forward into an ampler sph But he was a rare character, and his case was His employers had said, "We are ashamed you sh remain so long a servant in our house, with the w weight of affairs on you. We wish you to enter principal with us, and will advance you ten thou pounds. It is the custom of the city, it is your d we are dissatisfied to see you in your present sphe I assured him that it appeared to me to be his dut accede to the proposal. But I did not prevail. said, "Sir, I have often heard from you that it i easy thing to get to heaven. I have often heard f you that it is no easy thing to master the world. have every thing I wish; more would encumber increase my difficulties, and endanger me."

Solitude shows us what we should be; society sh us what we are. Yet in the theory, solitude show our true character better than society. A man in closet will find nature putting herself forth in acti which the presence of others would restrain him f bringing into real effect. She schemes and she wi here without reserve. She is pure nature. An enli ened and vigilant self-observer is surprised and alarn He puts himself on his guard; he goes forth armed the world. But society shows him that nature is p tically evil. The circumstances of the day as they a

carry him away. If he could abstract himself, and follow the actings of his own mind with an impartial eye, he could not believe himself to be the man who had entered into the world with such holy resolutions.

Recollection is the life of religion. The Christian wants to know no new thing, but to have his heart elevated more above the world, by secluding himself from it as much as his duties will allow, that religion may effect this its great end, by bringing its sublime hopes and prospects into more steady action on the mind.

I know not how it is that some Christians can make so little of recollection and retirement. I find the spirit of the world a strong assimilating principle. I find it hurrying my mind away in its vortex, and sinking me among the dregs and filth of a carnal nature. Even my ministerial employments would degenerate into a mere following of my trade and crying of my wares. I am obliged to withdraw myself regularly, and to say to my heart, "What are you doing? Where are you?"

ON

A SPIRITUAL MIND.

Dr Owen says, if a man of a carnal mind is brought into a large company, he will have much to do: if into a company of Christians, he will feel little interest: if into a smaller company engaged in religious exercises, he will feel still less; but if taken into a closet and forced to meditate on God and eternity, this will be insupportable!

The spiritual man is born, as it were, into a new world. He has a new taste. He "savours the things of the Spirit." He turns to God, as the needle to the pole.

This is a subject of which many can understand but little. They want spiritual taste. Nay, they account it enthusiasm. Bishop Horsley will go all the way with Christians into their principles; but he thinks the feelings and desires of a spiritual mind enthusiastical.

There are various *characteristics* of a spiritual mind.

Self-loathing is a characteristic of such a mind. The axe is laid to the root of a vain-glorious spirit.

It maintains, too, a walk and converse with God. "Enoch walked with God." There is a transaction

between God and the spiritual mind; if the man feels dead and heartless, that is matter of complaint to God. He looks to God for wisdom for the day—for the hour—for the business in hand.

A spiritual mind refers its affairs to God. "Let God's will be obeyed by me in this affair! His way may differ from that which I should choose; but let it be so! 'Surely, I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother; my soul is even as a weaned child.'"

A spiritual mind has something of the nature of the sensitive plant. "I shall smart if I touch this or that." There is a holy shrinking away from evil.

A spiritual mind enjoys at times the influx of a holy joy and satisfaction, which surprises even itself. When bereaved of creature-comforts, it can sometimes find such a repose in Christ and his promises, that the man can say, "Well! it is enough; let God take from me what else he pleases!"

A spiritual mind is a mortified mind. The Church of Rome talks much of mortification, but her mortification is not radical and spiritual. Simon Stylites will willingly mortify himself on his pillar, if he can bring people around him to pray to him to pray for them. But the spiritual mind must mortify itself in whatever would retard its ascent toward heaven: it must rise on the wings of faith, and hope, and love.

A spiritual mind is an ingenuous mind. There is a sort of hypocrisy in us all. We are not quite stripped of all disguise. One man wraps round him a covering of one kind, and another of another. They who think they do not this, yet do it though they know it not.

Yet this spiritual mind is a sublime mind. It has a vast and extended view. It has seen the glory and beauty of Christ, and cannot therefore admire the goodly buildings of the temple: as Christ, says Fenelon, had seen his Father's house, and could not therefore be taken with the glory of the earthly structure!

I would urge young persons, when they are staggered by the conversation of people of the world, to dwell on the characteristics of a spiritual mind. "If you cannot answer their arguments, yet mark their spirit; and mark what a contrary spirit that is which you are called to cultivate."

There are various means of maintaining and promoting a spiritual mind. Beware of saying concerning this or that evil, "Is it not a little one?" Much depends on mortifying the body. There are silent marches which the flesh will steal on us: the temper is too apt to rise; the tongue will let itself loose; the imagination, if liberty is given to it, will hurry us away. Vain company will injure the mind; carnal professors of religion especially will lower its tone: we catch a contagion from such men. Misemployment of time is injurious to the mind: when reflecting, in illness, on my past years, I have looked back with self-reproach on days spent in my study; I was wading through history, and poetry, and monthly journals; but I was in my study! Another man's trifling is notorious to all observers; but what am I doing? Nothing, perhaps, that has a reference to the spiritual good of my congregation. I do not speak against a chastised attention to literature, but the abuse of it. Avoid all idleness; "exercise thyself unto godliness;" plan for God. Beware of temptation: the mind which has dwelt on

sinful objects will be in darkness for days. Associate with spiritually-minded men: the very sight of a good man, though he says nothing, will refresh the soul. Contemplate Christ be much in retirement and prayer; study the honour and glory of your Master.

ON

DECLENSION IN RELIGION.

A CHRISTIAN may decline far in religion without being suspected. He may maintain appearances. Everything seems to others to go on well. He suspects himself, for it requires great labour to maintain appearances; especially in a minister. Discerning hearers will, however, often detect such declensions. He talks over his old matters. He says his things, but in a cold and unfeeling manner. He is sound, indeed, in doctrine, perhaps more sound than before; for there is a great tendency to soundness of doctrine, when appearances are to be kept up in a declining state of the heart.

Where a man has real grace, it may be part of a dispensation toward him that he is suffered to decline. He walked carelessly. He was left to decline, that he might be brought to feel his need of vigilance. If he is indulging a besetting sin, it may please God to expose him, especially if he is a high-spirited man, that he may hang down his head as long as he lives. He acted thus toward David and Hezekiah. But this is pulling down, in order to build up again.

The causes of a decline in religion should be remarked:—

The world has always much to do in religious declension. A minister is tempted, perhaps, to sacrifice everything to a name. If any appetite is suffered to prevail, it will stupify the mind; religion is an abstract and elevated affair; "the way of life is above to the wise, to depart from hell beneath." Keeping on good terms with those who respect us is a snare. A speculative turn of mind is a snare; it leads to that "evil heart of unbelief which departs from the living God." Vain confidence thinks himself in no danger; he knows the truth; he can dispute for the truth; "what should we fear?" Why that we have no fear. Trifling with conscience is a snare; no man indulges himself in anything which his conscience tells him ought not to be done, but it will at length wear away his spirituality of mind.

The symptoms of a religious decline are many:—

When a minister begins to depart from God and to lose a spiritual mind, he becomes fond sometimes of genteel company, who can entertain him, and who know how to respect his character. This genteel spirit is suspicious; it is associated with pride, and delicacy, and a love of ease; in short, it is the spirit of the world. It is the reverse of condescending to mean things; it is the reverse of the spirit of our Master.

It is a symptom of decline when a man will unnecessarily expose the imperfections of the religious world. "Such a man," he will say, "is fond of praying; but he is fond of money." This is the very opposite spirit to that of St Paul, who speaks "even weeping, of those who mind earthly things."

A violent sectarian spirit is a sign of religious declension. Honest men stand firm for the vitals of religion.

If the mind were right, the circumstantials of religion would not be made matters of fierce contention. The spirit of St Paul was of another kind. "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend"—"One believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth."

Aversion from reproof marks a state of religious decline. The man cannot bear to have his state depicted, even in the pulpit. He calls the preaching, which searches and detects him, Arminian and legal. "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Why should we quarrel with the truth? If that truth is delivered in its just proportions, his quarrel is with God.

Stupidity under chastisement proves a man to be under declension. He is not disposed to ask, "Wherefore dost thou contend with me?" He is "kicking against the pricks." He is "stricken, but has not grieved." He is "chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke."

Such a man, too, has often a high mind. He is unhumbled—boasting—stout-hearted. He is ready to censure every one but himself.

Unnecessary occupation is another evidence of declension. Some men are unavoidably much engaged in the world; to such men God will give especial grace if they seek it; and they shall maintain a spirit of devotion even in the bustle and occupation of their affairs. But some men will be rich, and therefore "fall into temptation and a snare;" they will have shops in different parts of the town: they say they do not feel this affect their religious state; but I cannot believe them.

A man is declined from God before he enters on such schemes; a spiritual and devout man will generally find the business in which he is already engaged a sufficent snare.

In short, the symptoms may be this or that, but the disease is a dead palsy. "Ephraim! he hath mixed himself among the people: Ephraim is a cake not turned. Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not."

ON A CHRISTIAN'S

ASSOCIATING WITH IRRELIGIOUS PERSONS

FOR THEIR GOOD.

CHRIST is an example to us of entering into mixed society. But our imitation of him herein must admit of restrictions. A feeble man must avoid danger. If any one could go into society as Christ did, then let him go: let him attend marriage-feasts and Pharisees' houses.

Much depends on a Christian's observing his call—the openings which Providence may make before him. It is not enough to say that he frequents public company in order to retard the progress of evil.

But, when in company of people of the world, we should treat them kindly and tenderly—with feeling and compassion. They should be assisted, if they are inclined to receive assistance. But if a Christian falls into the society of a mere worldling, it must be like the meeting of two persons in rain—they will part as soon as possible. If a man loves such company, it is an evil symptom.

It is a Christian's duty to maintain a kind intercourse, if practicable, with his relatives. And he must duly appreciate their state: if not religious, they cannot

see, and feel, and taste his enjoyments: they accommodate themselves to him, and he accommodates himself to them. It is much a matter of accommodation on both sides.

Avoid disgusting such friends unnecessarily. A precise man, for instance, must be humoured. Your friends set down your religion, perhaps, as a case of humour.

Cultivate good sense. If your friends perceive you weak in any part of your views and conduct, they will think you weak in your religion.

Avoid vain jangling. There is a disposition in such friends to avoid important and pinching truth. If you will converse with them on the subject of religion, they will often endeavour to draw you on to such points as predestination. They will ask you what you think of the salvation of infants and of the heathen. All this is meant to throw out the great question.

Seize favourable occasions—not only the "*mollia tempora fandi*"—but when public characters and public events furnish occasions of profitable reflection.

Bring before your friends the extreme childishness of a sinful state. Treat worldly amusements as puerile things. People of the world are sick at heart of their very pleasures.

ON

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

It belongs to our very relation to God to set apart a portion of our time for his service; but as it might have been difficult for conscience to determine what that portion should be, God has prescribed it, and the ground of the observance remains the same, whether the remembrance of God's resting from his work, or any other reason, be assigned as the more immediate cause.

The Jewish Sabbath was partly of political institution, and partly of moral obligation. So far as it was a political appointment, designed to preserve the Jews distinct from other nations, it is abrogated; so far as it was of moral obligation, it remains in force.

Our Lord evidently designed to relax the strictness of the observance. Christianity is not a hedge placed round a peculiar people. A slave might enter into the spirit of Christianity, though obliged to work as a slave on the Sabbath; he might be "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," though in the mines of Patmos.

Difficulties often arise in respect to the observance of the Sabbath. I tell conscientious persons, "If you have the spirit of Christianity, and are in an employment contrary to Christianity, you will labour to escape

from it, and God will open your way." If such a man's heart be right, he will not throw himself out of his employment the first day he suspects himself to be wrong, but he will pray and wait till his way shall be opened before him.

Christ came not to abolish the Sabbath, but to explain and enforce it, as he did the rest of the law. Its observance was nowhere positively enjoined by him, because Christianity was to be practicable, and was to go into all nations; and it goes thither stripped of its precise and various circumstances. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day," seems to be the soul of the Christian Sabbath.

In this view of the day, a thousand frivolous questions concerning its observance would be answered. "What can I do?" says one: I answer, "Do what true servants of God will do. Bend not to what is wrong. Be 'in the Spirit;' God will help you."

In short, we are going to spend a Sabbath in eternity. The Christian will acquire as much of the Sabbath-spirit as he can. And in proportion to a man's real piety, in every age of the church, he will be found to have been a diligent observer of the Sabbath-day.

ON

JUDGING JUSTLY.

A PERFECTLY just and sound mind is a rare and invaluable gift. But it is still much more unusual to see such a mind unbiassed in all its actings. God has given this soundness of mind but to few; and a very small number of those few escape the bias of some predilection, perhaps habitually operating; and none are at all times and perfectly free. I once saw this subject forcibly illustrated. A watchmaker told me that a gentleman had put an exquisite watch into his hands, that went irregularly. It was as perfect a piece of work as was ever made. He took it to pieces and put it together again twenty times. No manner of defect was to be discovered, and yet the watch went intolerably. At last it struck him that possibly the balance-wheel might have been near a magnet. On applying a needle to it, he found his suspicion true. Here was all the mischief. The steel work in the other parts of the watch had a perpetual influence on its motions; and the watch went as well as possible with a new wheel. If the soundest mind be magnetised by any predilection, it must act irregularly.

Prejudice is often the result of such strong associations, that it acts involuntarily, in spite of conviction and resolution. The first step toward its eradication, is the persevering habit of presenting it to the mind in its true colours.

If a man will look at most of his prejudices, he will find that they arise from his field of view being necessarily narrow, like the eye of the fly. He can have but little better notions of the whole scheme of things, as has been well said, than a fly on the pavement of St Paul's Cathedral can have of the whole structure. He is offended, therefore, by inequalities which are lost in the grand design. This persuasion will fortify him against many injurious and troublesome prejudices.

Just judgment depends on the simplicity and the strength of the mind. The eye which conveys a perfect idea of the scene to the mind, must be unclouded and strong. If the mental eye be not single, the judgment will be warped by some little, mean, and selfish interests; and, if it be not capable of a wide and distant range, the decision will be partial and imperfect, For example: a man with either of these feelings will be likely to blind his eyes from the conviction that would dart on him when he places a son or a friend in any sphere of influence, because he is his son or his friend; when a single or a strong eye would show him that the interests of religion and truth required him to prefer some other person. The mind must be

raised above the petty interests and affairs of life, and pursue supremely the glory of God and the church.

Some minds are so diseased, that they can see an affair only in that light in which passion or predilection first presented it, or as it appears on the surface. The essence, the truth of the thing, which must give character to the whole, and on which all just decision must depend, may lie beneath the surface, and may be a nice affair. But such minds cannot enter into it. It is as though I should try to convince such persons —allowing me that the pineal gland is the seat of the soul—that, however fair and perfect the form, the man wanted the essence of his being, in wanting that apparently insignificant part of his body. Such men would say, "Here is a striking and perfect form—all parts are harmonious—life animates the frame—the machine plays admirably—what has this little, insignificant member to do with it?" And yet this is the essential and characterising part of the man.

Every man has a peculiar turn of mind, which gives a colouring and tinge to his thoughts. I have particularly detected this in myself with respect to public affairs. I have such an immediate view of God acting in them, that all the great men, who make such a noise and bustle on the scene, seem to me like so many mere puppets. God is moving them all, to effect his own designs. They cannot advance a step whither he does not lead; nor stand a moment where he does not place them. Now, this is a view of things which it is my

privilege to take as a Christian. But the evil lies here. I dwell so much on the view of the matter to which the turn of my mind leads me, that I forget sometimes the natural tendencies of things. God uses all things, but not so as to destroy their natural tendencies. They are good or evil, according to their own nature; not according to the use which he makes of them.

The mind has a constant tendency to conform itself to the sentiments and cast of thinking with which it is chiefly conversant, either among books or men. If the influence remain undetected, it grows soon into an inveterate habit of obliquity. Even if it be detected, it is the most difficult thing in the world to bring back the mind to the standard, especially if there be anything in its constitution which assimilates itself to the error. I was once much in the habit of reading the mystical writers; a book of Dr Owen's clearly convinced me that they erred; yet I found my mind ever inclining toward them, and winding round like the biassed bowl. I saw clearly the absurdity of the notions in their view of them, and yet I was ever talking of "self-annihilation," &c., and am not even now rid of the thing.

ON

THE CHARACTER OF ST PAUL.

I DELIGHT to contemplate St Paul as an appointed pattern. Men might have questioned the propriety of urging on them the example of Christ; they might have said that we are necessarily in dissimilar circumstances. But St Paul stands up in like case with ourselves, a model of ministerial virtues.

We consider him, perhaps, in point of character, more the immediate subject of extraordinary inspiration than he was in reality. And this mistake affects our view of him in two different ways.

We suppose at one time that his virtues were so much the effect of extraordinary communications, that he is no proper model for us; whereas he was no farther fitted to his circumstances than every Christian has warrant to expect to be, so far as his circumstances are similar.

At another time, perhaps, though we acknowledge and revere his distinguished character, yet our view of his virtues is exalted beyond due measure. We should remember that, as he was fitted for his circumstances, so he was in a great measure made by them. Many men are, doubtless, executing their appointed task in

retirement and silence, who would unfold a character beyond all expectation, if Providence were to lead them into a scene where the world rose up in arms, and they were sent forth into it under a clear conviction of an especial mission. The history of the church seems to show us that the effects of grace, ordinary or extraordinary, have been the same in all ages.

In speaking of St Paul, it has been usual to magnify his learning, among the many other great qualities which he possessed. That point seems never to have been satisfactorily made out. He was an educated Pharisee; but farther than this I think we cannot go. His quotations from the Greek poets are not evidences ot even a school-boy's learning in our day; for we forget, when we talk of them, that he was a Roman quoting Greek. Nor do I see anything more in his famous speech in the Areopagus, so often produced as evidence on this subject, than the line of argument to which a strong and energetic mind would lead him. If we talk of his talents, indeed, he rises almost beyond admiration; but they were talents of a certain order, and the very display which we have of them seems a strong corroborative proof that he is not to be considered as a profoundly learned man of his day. For instance, had he studied Aristotle, it would have been almost impossible but he must have caught some influence which we should have seen in his writings. But there is nothing like the dry, logical, metaphysical character of that school, which yet had then given the law to the seats of science and philosophy. Instead of this, we see everywhere the copious, diffusive, declaiming, discursive, but sublime, and wise, and effective mind.

There is a true apostolicism in the character Paul. It is a combination of zeal and love.

The zeal of some men is of a haughty, unbe ferocious character. They have the letter of trut they mount the pulpit like prize-fighters. It i them a perpetual scold. This spirit is a reproach gospel. It is not the spirit of Jesus Christ. He to have laboured to win men.

But there is an opposite extreme. The love o men is all milk and mildness. There is so muc cacy, and so much fastidiousness. They touc such tenderness; and if the patient shrinks, th touch no more. The times are too flagrant for disposition. The gospel is sometimes preached way, till all the people agree with the preacher gives no offence, and he does no good.

But St Paul united and blended love and zeal must win souls, but he will labour to do this by a sible lawful contrivances. "I am made all thi all men, that I might by all means save some." alone, may degenerate into ferociousness and bru and love, alone, into fastidiousness and delicacy; b apostle combined both qualities, and more perfectl other men realised the union of the *fortiter in r* the *suaviter in modo.*

MISCELLANIES.

THE Moravians seem to have very nearly hit on Christianity. They appear to have found out what sort of a thing it is—its quietness, meekness, patience, spirituality, heavenliness, and order; but they want fire. A very superior woman among them once said to me that there wanted another body, the character of which should be combined from the Moravians and the Methodists. The Moravians have failed in making too little of preaching, as the Methodists have done in making too much of it.

The grandest operations both in nature and in grace are the most silent and imperceptible. The shallow brook babbles in its passage and is heard by every one, but the coming on of the seasons is silent and unseen. The storm rages and alarms, but its fury is soon exhausted and its effects are partial and soon remedied; but the dew, though gentle and unheard, is immense in quantity and the very life of large portions of the earth. And these are pictures of the operations of grace in the church and in the soul.

Atheism is a characteristic of our day. On the sentiments, manners, pursuits, amusements, and dealings of the great body of mankind, there is written in broad characters—"Without God in the world!"

I have often had occasion to observe that a warm, blundering man does more for the world than a frigid, wise man. A man who gets into a habit of inquiring about properties, and expediencies, and occasions, often spends his life without doing anything to purpose. The state of the world is such, and so much depends on action, that every thing seems to say loudly to every man, "Do something,—do it,—do it."

Providence is a greater mystery than religion. The state of the world is more humiliating to our reason than the doctrines of the gospel. A reflecting Christian sees more to excite his astonishment and to exercise his faith, in the state of things between Temple Bar and St Paul's, than in what he reads from Genesis to Revelation. See the description of the working of God's providence in the account of the cherubim in the 1st and 10th chapters of Ezekiel.

The scheme and machinery of redemption may be illustrated by the water-works at Marly. We consider a part of that complicated machinery, and we cannot calculate on the effects, but we see that they are produced. We cannot explain to a philosopher the system of redemption and the mode of conducting and communi-

cating its benefits to the human soul; but we know that it yields the water of life,—civilization to a barbarian—direction to a wanderer—support to those that are ready to perish.

It is manifest that God designed to promote intercourse and commerce among men by giving to each climate its appropriate productions. It is in itself not only innocent but laudable. All trade, however, which is founded in embellishment is founded in depravity; so also is that spirit of trade which pushes men on dangerous competitions. Many tradesmen professedly religious seem to look on their trade as a vast engine, which will be worked to no good effect if it be not worked with the whole vigour of the soul. This is an intoxicating and ruinous mistake. So far as they live under the power of religion, they will pursue their trade for sustenance and provision, but not even that with unseasonable attention and with eagerness; much less will religion suffer them to bury themselves in it when its objects are something beyond these, and, least of all, will it leave them to deceive themselves with certain commercial maxims so far removed from simplicity and integrity, that I have been often shocked beyond measure at hearing them countenanced and adopted by some religious professors.

Every man should aim to do one thing well. If he dissipates his attention on several objects, he may have excellent talents entrusted to him, but they will be entrusted to no good end. Concentrated on his proper

object, they might have a vast energy; but, dissipated on several, they will have none. Let other objects be pursued, indeed; but only so far as they may subserve the main purpose. By neglecting this rule, I have seen frivolity and futility written on minds of great power; and, by regarding it, I have seen very limited minds acting in the first rank of their profession;—I have seen a large capital and a great stock dissipated, and the man reduced to beggary; and I have seen a small capital and stock improved to great riches.

To effect any purpose, in study, the mind must be concentrated. If any other subject plays on the fancy than that which ought to be exclusively before it, the mind is divided, and both are neutralised, so as to lose their effect. Just as when I learnt two systems of shorthand. I was familiar with Gurney's method, and wrote it with ease; but, when I took it into my head to learn Byrom's, they destroyed each other, and I could write neither.

There should be something obvious, determinate, and positive, in a man's reasons for taking a journey; especially if he be a minister. Such events and consequences may be connected with it in every step, that he ought, in no case, to be more simply dependent on the great Appointer of means and occasions. Several journeys, which I thought myself called on to take, I have since had reason to think I should not have taken. Negative, and even doubtful reasons, may justify him in choosing the safer side of staying at home; but there ought to be something more in the reasons which put him out of

his way, to meet the unknown consequences of a voluntary change of station. Let there always be a "because" to meet the "why."

I sometimes see, as I sit in my pew at St John's, during the service, an idle fellow saunter into the chapel. He gapes about him for a few minutes; finds nothing to interest and arrest him; seems scarcely to understand what is going forward; and, after a lounge or two, goes out again. I look at him, and think, "Thou art a wonderful creature! A perfect miracle! What a machine is that body!—curiously, fearfully, wonderfully framed. An intricate, delicate, but harmonious and perfect structure! And, then, to ascend to thy soul!—its nature!—its capacities!—its actual state!—its designation!—its eternal condition!" I am lost in amazement, while he seems to have no more consciousness of all this than the brutes which perish!

Sin, pursued to its tendencies, would pull God from his throne. Though I have a deep conviction of its "exceeding sinfulness," I live not a week without seeing some exhibition of its malignity which draws from me—"Well! who could have imagined this!" Sin would subjugate heaven, earth, and hell to itself. It would make the universe the minion of its lusts, and all beings bow down and worship.

It is one of the most awful points of view in which we can consider God, that, as a righteous Governor of

the world, concerned to vindicate his own glory, he has laid himself under a kind of holy necessity to purify the unclean, or to sink him into perdition.

It is one of the curses of error, that the man, who is the subject of it, if he has had the opportunity of being better informed, cannot possibly do right, so far as he is under it. He has brought himself into an utter incapacity of acting virtuously: since it is vicious to obey an ill-informed conscience, if that conscience might have been better informed; and certainly vicious to disobey conscience, whether it be well or ill-informed.

The approaches of sin are like the conduct of Jael. It "brings butter in a lordly dish." It bids high for the soul. But, when it has fascinated and lulled the victim, the nail and the hammer are behind.

I have met with one case in my ministry, very frequent and very distressing. A man says to me, "I approve all you say. I see things to be just as you state them. I see a necessity, a propriety, a beauty in the religion of Christ. I see it to be interesting and important. But I do not feel it. I cannot feel it. I have no spirit of prayer. My heart belies my head: its affections refuse to follow my convictions." If this complaint be ingenuous, it is an evidence of grace; and I say, "Wait for God, and he will appear." But too often it is not ingenuous: the heart is actually indisposed; some tyrant holds it in bondage. The com-

plaint is a mockery—because there is no sincerity of endeavour to obtain the object of which it pretends to lament the want—there is no sincere desire and prayer for the quickening and breathing of God's Holy Spirit on the torpid soul.

The man who labours to "please his neighbour for his good to edification," has "the mind that was in Christ." It is a sinner trying to help a sinner. How different the face of things if this spirit prevailed! If Dissenters were like Henry, and Watts, and Doddridge; and Churchmen like Leighton! The man who comes prominently forward in any way may expect to be found fault with; one will call him harsh, and another a trimmer. A hard man may be reverenced, but men will like him best at a distance; he is an iron man; he is not like Jesus Christ: Christ might have driven Thomas from his presence for his unreasonable incredulity—but not so! It is as though he had said, "I will come down to thy weakness; if thou canst not believe without thrusting thy hand into my side, then thrust in thy hand." Even a feeble, but kind and tender man, will effect more than a genius, who is rough or artificial. There is danger, doubtless, of humouring others; and against this we must be on our guard. It is a kind and accommodating spirit at which we must aim. When the two goats met on the bridge which was too narrow to allow them either to pass each other or to return, the goat which lay down that the other might walk over him was a finer gentleman than Lord Chesterfield.

To expect disease wherever he goes, and to lay him-

acknowledge excellence, and ascribe the glory where it is due, while we honour the possessor; but let us remember that God has, by leaving his greatest servants to the natural operation of human frailty in some point or other of their character, written on the face of the Christian church, "Cease ye from man!" He does by perfection in character as he did by the body of Moses—he hides it, that it may not be idolised. Our affections, our prejudices, or our ignorance cover the creature with a dazzling veil, but he lifts it up, and seems to say, "See the creature you admire!"

A man who thinks himself to have attained Christian perfection, in the sense in which it has been insisted on by some persons, either deceives himself, by calling sin infirmity, or Satan leaves him undisturbed in false security, or the demon of pride overcomes the demon of lust.

The trials of the tempted Christian are often sent for the use of others, and are made the riches of all around him.

If I were not penetrated with a conviction of the truth of the Bible, and the reality of my own experience, I should be confounded on all sides, from within and from without, in the world and in the church.

If a good man cannot prevent evil, he will hang heavy on its wings, and retard its progress.

We are too much disposed to look at the outside of things. The face of every affair chiefly affects us. Were God to draw aside the veil, and to show us but a little of the reality and the relations of the most apparently mysterious and complicated dispensations, we should acquiesce with reverence and admiration. A minister, for example, may be taken away in the beginning of a promising career, or in the midst of great usefulness. If we cannot perceive any direct reason for this providence, we stand amazed; but if we could look forward into the farther life of such men, we should probably see that they were taken away in mercy to themselves, to the church, or to the world.

I have seen too much of life to have anything to do in the troubled waters of my friends, by way of giving advice, unless they will allow me to remain in secret. This especially applies to some Christians of more sincerity than prudence. An opinion given on difficult and controverted cases, in confidence of its being used only as a private principle of action, has been quoted as authority in defence of the conduct founded on it.

Many duties are involved in the very nature of religion, concerning which there is perhaps not one express precept to be found in the Scriptures. Private, family, or public devotions are nowhere enjoined, as to the time, or frequency, or manner of performing them. Yet they are so strongly implied in the very nature of religion, and they are supposed so necessarily to flow

from the divine principle of spiritual life in the soul, that those men greatly err who think themselves not obliged by their religion to the most diligent use of them that circumstances will allow. And surely we may trace here the footsteps of divine wisdom. If it had been said, "Thou shalt do this or that, at such and such times," this would have brought a yoke on the neck of the Christian, and, even when absolutely unavoidable circumstances prevented him from complying with the injunction, would have left sin on his conscience; while the way in which the duty is enforced leaves him a Christian liberty that is abundantly guarded against all licentiousness. He sees the duty implied and exemplified in a thousand instances throughout the Scripture. The same principle is applicable to certain pursuits which occupy the men of the world, the general unlawfulness of which is fully implied, though they neither are nor could have been forbidden by name.

Nothing seems important to me but so far as it is connected with morals. The end, the *cui bono?* enters into my view of every thing. Even the highest acts of the intellect become criminal trifling when they occupy much of the time of a moral creature, and especially of a minister. If the mind cannot feel and treat mathematics and music and every thing else as a trifle, it has been seduced and enslaved. Brainerd, and Grimshaw, and Fletcher were men; most of us are dwarfs.

In imitating examples, there are two rules to be regarded: We must not stretch ours beyond our measure;

nor must we despise that in another which is unsuitable to ourselves.

A piece has been written to prove that the gospel is preached to sinners only in the lowest state of misery and imbecility. Some men get hold of an opinion, and push it so far that it meets and contradicts other opinions, fairly deducible from Scripture. And it is no uncommon thing with them to suppose that nobody else holds the same opinion, when, if they would look into the minds of other men, they would find themselves deceived. We preach the gospel to sinners in the lowest condition, and the only reason I do not preach it to devils is, that I find no gospel provided for devils. As to the Roman Catholic notion of a grace of congruity, in their sense of it I utterly disclaim it. Some of the best of them taught that God prepared the heart for himself in various unseen ways. And who can deny this? but this is far different from the notion that some minds have a natural congruity or suitableness to the gospel. The fallow-ground of the heart may be broken up, ploughed, and prepared by unseen and most circuitous means. I have gone from hearing a man preach incomparable nonsense who knew spiritual religion, to hearing a man of a carnal mind and habits who knew nothing of spiritual religion preach incomparable sense; and I thought the carnal preacher much more likely to call men to some feeling of religion.

The imagination is the grand organ whereby truth can make successful approaches to the mind. Some

preachers deal much with the passions, they attack the hopes and fears of men. But this is a very different thing from the right use of the imagination, as the medium of impressing truth. Jesus Christ has left perfect patterns of this way of managing men. But it is a distinct talent, and a talent committed to very few. It is an easy thing to move the passions; a rude, blunt, illiterate attack may do this. But to form one new figure for the conveyance of truth to the mind is a difficult thing. The world is under no small obligation to the man who forms such a figure. The French strain this point so far that the effort is continually seen. To be effective, there must be about it a *naiveté*, an ease, a self-evidence. The figures of the French writers vanish from the mind, like the flourish of a musical band. The figures of Jesus Christ sink into the mind, and leave there the indelible impress of the truth which they convey.

The religious world has a great momentum. Money and power, in almost any quantity, are brought forth into action when any fair object is set before it. It is a pendulum that swings with prodigious force. But it wants a regulator. If there is no regulating force on it of sufficent power, its motions will be so violent and eccentric, that it will tear the machine to pieces. And, therefore, when I have any influence in its designs and schemes, I cannot help watching them with extreme jealousy, to throw in every directing and regulating power which can be obtained from any quarter.

Nothing can be proposed so wild or so absurd as not

to find a party, and often a very large party, ready to espouse it. It is a sad reflection on human nature, but it is too true. It would have argued gross ignorance of mankind to expect even Swedenborgianism to be rejected at once by the common sense of men. He who laid the snare, knew that if a few characters of some learning and respectability could be brought to espouse it, there would be soon a silly multitude ready to follow.

The religious world has many features which are distressing to a holy man. He sees in it much proposal and ostentation, covering much surface. But Christianity is deep and substantial. A man is soon enlisted; but he is not soon made a soldier. He is easily put into the ranks, to make a show there; but he is not so easily brought to do the duties of the ranks. We are too much like an army of Asiatics—they count well, and cut a good figure; but when they come into action, one has no flint, another has no cartridge, the arms of one are rusty, and another has not learnt to handle them. This was not the complaint equally at all times. It belongs too peculiarly to the present day. The fault lies in the muster. We are like Falstaff; he took the king's money to press good and true men, but got together such ragamuffins that he was ashamed to muster them. What is the consequence? People groan under their connections. Respectable persons tell me such stories of their servants who profess religion, as to shame and distress me. High pretensions to spirituality! Warm zeal for certain sentiments! Priding themselves in Mr Such-a-one's ministry! But what becomes of their duties? Oh, these are "beggarly ele-

some things, Protestants have made too little of them. The Papists treat man as all sense; and therefore some Protestants would treat him as all spirit. Because one party has exalted the Virgin Mary to a divinity, the other can scarcely think of that "most highly favoured among women" with common respect. The Papist puts the Apocrypha into his canon—the Protestant will scarcely regard it as an ancient record. The Popish heresy of human merit in justification drove Luther, on the other side, into most unwarrantable and unscriptural statements of that doctrine. The Papists consider grace as inseparable from the participation of the sacraments—the Protestants too often lose sight of them as instituted means of conveying grace.

The language of irreligion in the heart is, "Give—give—now—now—whatever the flesh and the eye lust after, and whatever gratifies the pride of life. Give it now—for, as to any reversion, I will not sacrifice a single lust for it; or, if I must have a religion, it shall be anything rather than that demeaning system, which makes every thing a mere boon."

Instead of attempting any logical and metaphysical explanation of justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, all which attempts have human infirmity stamped upon them, I would look at the subject in the great and impressive light in which Scripture places it before me. It teaches me to regard the intervention of Christ for me, as the sole ground of all expectation toward God. In consideration of his sufferings, my

guilt is remitted, and I am restored to that which I had lost by sin. Let us add to this, that the sufferings of Christ were in our stead, and we shall see the point of view in which Scripture sets him forth as the deserver and procurer to us of all pardon and grace. The thing is declared—not explained. Let us not, therefore, darken a subject which is held forth in a prominent light, by our idle endeavours to make it better understood.

Regeneration and conversion may be distinguished from each other, though they cannot be separated. They may be distinguished; as a man's being disposed to go in a certain road, and his actually going in that road, may be distinguished; for regeneration is God's disposing the heart to himself; but conversion is the actual turning of the heart to God.

There is an immeasurable distance between the genuine and the spurious Christian. The genuine Christian may be weak, wild, eccentric, fanatical, faulty; but he is right-hearted; you find "the root of the matter" in him. The spurious Christian is the most dangerous of men, and one of the most difficult to deal with. You see what he is, but you find it almost impossible to keep clear of him. He will seek your acquaintance in order to authenticate his own character—to indorse his own reputation; but avoid him. His errors and vices will be assigned to the church, by an indiscriminating world. There is less danger in associating with worldly people by profession, and more tenderness to be

cacy often cramp its exertion; but it is our duty to call ourselves out to the exertion of this power, as Mordecai called out Esther, chap. iv. It is our duty to watch against everything that might hinder or pervert our influence, for mere regard to reputation will often carry many into error. Who would not follow Aaron in worshipping the golden calf? Even men of feeble public talents may acquire much influence by kindness and consistency of character. Ministers are defective in resting their personal influence too much on their public ministry. Time will give weight to a man's character; and it is one advantage to a man to be cast early into his situation, that he may earn a character.

The instances of artifice which occur in Scripture are not to be imitated, but avoided: if Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob equivocate in order to obtain their ends, this is no warrant to me to do so: David's falsehood concerning Goliath's sword argued distrust of God. If any part of the truth which I am bound to communicate be concealed, this is sinful artifice. The Jesuits in China, in order to remove the offence of the cross, declared that it was a falsehood invented by the Jews that Christ was crucified; but they were expelled from the empire, and this was designed, perhaps, to be held up as a warning to all missionaries that no good end is to be carried by artifice.

But address is of a different nature. There is no falsehood, deception, or equivocation in address. St Paul, for instance, employed lawful address, and not artifice, when he set the Sadducees and Pharisees at variance; he employed a lawful argument to interest

the Pharisees in his favour: this was great address, but it had nothing of criminal artifice. In Joshua's ambushes for the men of Ai there was nothing sinful; it was a lawful stratagem of war. It would have been unlawful to tell the men of Ai there was no ambush; but they knew that they came out of their city liable to such ambushes. Christ's conduct at Emmaus, and that of the angels at Sodom, were meant as trials of the regard of those with whom they were conversing.

Precipitation is acting without sufficient grounds of action. Youth is the peculiar season of precipitation; the young man's motto is "Onward!" There is no such effectual cure of this evil as experience, when a man is made to feel the effects of his precipitation, both in body and mind; and God alone can thus bring a man acquainted with himself. There is a self-blindness in precipitation; a precipitate man is at the time a blind man. "That be far from thee!" said St Peter; "this shall not happen to thee." "As the Lord liveth," said David, "the man that hath done this thing shall surely die."

There is great criminality in precipitation. A man under its influence is continually tempted to take God's work out of his hands. It is not a state of dependence. It betrays want of patience with respect to God, and want of faith. "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul." It discovers a want of charity; in a rash moment we may do an injury to our neighbour which we can never repair.

There are few who do not feel that they are suffering through life the effects of their own precipitation. "He,

then, that trusteth his own heart is a fool." In precipitate moments we should learn to say, "I am not now the man to give an opinion, or to take a single step."

Method, as Mrs More says, is the very hinge of business; and there is no method without punctuality. Punctuality is important, because it subserves the peace and good temper of a family; the want of it not only infringes on necessary duty, but sometimes excludes this duty. Punctuality is important as it gains time, it is like packing things in a box; a good packer will get in half as much more as a bad one. The calmness of mind which it produces, is another advantage of punctuality; a disorderly man is always in a hurry, he has no time to speak with you, because he is going elsewhere; and when he gets there, he is too late for his business, or he must hurry away to another before he can finish it. It was a wise maxim of the Duke of Newcastle, "I do one thing at a time." Punctuality gives weight to character. "Such a man has made an appointment; then I know he will keep it." And this generates punctuality in you; for, like other virtues, it propagates itself. Servants and children must be punctual, where their leader is so. Appointments indeed become debts; I owe you punctuality, if I have made an appointment with you, and have no right to throw away your time if I do my own.

It is a difficult question in casuistry—How far a man is bound to betray confidence for general good. [illegible] it be considered what consequences would follow

m a man's disclosing all the evil he knows. The rld would become a nest of scorpions. He must en mistake, and of course calumniate. Such is his apacity to determine what is really evil in his neighır, and such are the mischiefs frequently arising m the disclosure of even what should be in truth l, that he seems rather called on to be silent till cirnstances render it a case of duty to remain silent no ger. But if this be his general rule, it will be his ty to observe silence much oftener in cases of confiıce. Professional men—a minister, a lawyer, a dical man—have an official secrecy imposed on m. If this were not the case, a distressed conence could never unburthen itself to its confessor. alculable injuries to health and property must sustained, for want of proper advisers. This lies in a very high sense to a minister consi-ed as a confessor—a director of the conscience. alarmed conscience will unfold its most interior reses before him. It is said Dr Owen advised a man, o, under religious convictions, confessed to him a rder which he had perpetrated some years before, to render himself up to justice. The man did so, and s executed. I think Dr Owen erred in his advice. hought myself right in urging on persons who have ned their hearts to me, deep humiliation before God crimes committed in an unconverted state; but, as ıad pleased Him to give a thorough hatred of those nes to the mind, and a consequent self-loathing and miliation, and yet to allow in his providence that y should have remained undiscovered, I judged that matter might be safely left with Him. Yet there y be cases in which general consequences require

that confidence should be betrayed. Such cases usually relate to evil in progress. To prevent or counteract such evil it may be necessary to disclose what has been entrustedin confidence; yet the party should be honestly warned, if its purposes are not changed, what duty your conscience will require.

I have felt twice in my life very extraordinary impressions under sermons, and that from men least calculated to affect me. A man of great powers, but so dissipated on everything that he knew nothing—a frivolous, futile babbler, whom I was ready almost to despise—surprised and chained me so, in my own church at Lewes, that I was thunderstruck. I think it was concerning the dove not finding rest for the sole of her foot; he felt the subject strongly himself, and, in spite of all my prejudices against him and my real knowledge of his character, he made me feel it as I have scarcely ever done before or since. In the other instance, I had to do with a very different character—he was a simple but weak man; it pleased God, however, to shoot an arrow by his hand into my heart. I had been some time in a dry, fruitless frame, and was persuading myself that all was going on well; he said one day at Lewes, with an indescribable simplicity, that "men might cheer themselves in the morning, and they might pass on tolerably well perhaps without God at noon, but the cool of the day was coming when God would come down to talk with them." It was a message from God to me. I felt as though God had descended into the church, and was about to call me to my account! In the former instance I was more surprised

and astonished than affected religiously, but in this I was unspeakably moved.

Constitutional bias is a suspicious interpreter of providential leadings. A man's besetting sin lies in that to which his nature is most inclined, and, therefore, to walk wisely and holily he should be very jealous of such supposed leadings in Providence as draw with his constitutional propensity. He is never safe, unless he is in the act of collaring his nature as a rebel and forcing it into submission. A sanguine man sees a sign and token in every thing; in every ordinary occurrence his imagination hears a call; his pious fancy is the source and food of an eager, disquieted, and restless habit of mind. An enterprising man has great facility in finding God in whatever seems to open to honour, or influence, or power. But he has lost the right estimate of things: if God seem to draw with an enterprising mind, the man should stand and tremble. Providence may really lead some retired and humble men into situations which the ambitious man would covet; but, even in that case, it is not to be regarded as an evidence of favour, so much as an increase of trial and responsibility; but He can never open before an enterprising and ambitious character, unless in judgment, or in such imminence of trial as should call the man to self-suspicion and humility. A pleasurable man easily discerns God's hand in every thing which seems to put his favourite indulgences within his power: such a thing was a great providence! and he is vastly grateful! while he sees not that he is led away to broken cisterns. An idle man has a constant tendency to torpidity. He

has adopted the Indian maxim, that it is better to walk than to run, and better to stand than to walk, and better to sit than to stand, and better to lie than to sit. He hugs himself in the notion that God calls him to be quiet—that he is not made for bustling and noise—that such and such a thing plainly show him he ought to retire and sit still. A busy man is never at rest; he sees himself called so often into action, that he digs too much to suffer anything to grow, and waters so profusely that he drowns. The danger in all these cases is, lest a man should bless himself in his snares.

Adam well observes:—"A poor country parson fighting against the devil in his parish, has nobler ideas than Alexander had." Men of the world know nothing of true glory; they know nothing of the grandeur of that sentiment, "Thou, O God, art the thing that I long for!" You may, perhaps, find this sentiment in the corner of some monastery, where a poor ignorant creature is mumbling over his prayers; or it may even be found to exist with the nonsense and fanaticism of a Swedenborgian; but, wherever it is, it is true dignity.

Look at the bravery of the world! Go into the Park. Who is the object of admiration there? The captain, swelling and strutting at the head of his corps. And what is there at the Court?—"Make way! make way!" And who is this? A bit of clay, with a ribbon tied round it! Now it makes nothing against the comparative emptiness and littleness of these things, that I or any man should be ensnared by them, and play the fool with the rest of the species. Truth is

truth, and dignity is dignity, in spite of the errors and folly of any man living.

But this is the outside. What are the greatest minds, and the noblest projects of the world, compared with a Christian! Take Mr Pitt for an instance, and contrast him with the most insignificant old woman in the Church of Christ. If the Bible be not true, you have no standard; all your reasonings, and science, and philosophy, and metaphysics, are gross absurdity and folly. But if the Bible be true, Mr Pitt, great and noble as he is, yet considered as a mere politician, even Mr Pitt has a little, contracted, mean mind! a driveller! an earth-worm! Compared with his projects and schemes, the old woman who rises at two o'clock in the morning, lights her farthing candle, stands all day over her wash-tub, at night puts on her red cloak, steals out to some place of worship, hears the truths of the gospel, mingled, perhaps, with ignorant yet honest zeal, but draws in good into an honest and prepared heart—why, this woman is a heroine—a noble mind—compared with the greatest of men, considered as a mere man of this world!

Bishop Wilkins has said admirably, that "nothing in man is great, but so far as it is connected with God." The only wise thing recorded of Xerxes is his reflection on the sight of his army—That not one of that immense multitude would survive a hundred years: it seems to have been a momentary gleam of true light and feeling.

APPENDIX.

REMARKS BY MR CECIL,

COMMUNICATED BY SOME FRIENDS.

A HIDING-PLACE implies secrecy. He who can say unto God, "Thou art my hiding-place," may go abroad about his affairs, and may pass through a thousand dangers, and yet, at the same time, have such a hiding-place in the favour and protection of God, that, when he seems to be exposed on every side, still he is secured and hidden from every evil.

A great man, however high his office and talents, is dependent on little things. "Jonah was exceeding glad of his gourd." However splendid and towering, man is "crushed beneath the moth," if God does not uphold him; so that, while we are admiring the great man, as he is called, and however he may be disposed to admire himself, and to speak "great swelling words of vanity," facts will show that he is a poor dependent creature, who cannot live a moment without God. If the Holy Spirit opens his eyes, he will perceive that he cannot stand alone; but can only support himself and climb, like the ivy, by clasping one stronger than himself.

Dreams are common to sleeping. No man begins to slumber in religion, but he falls into some golden dream. It is a device of Satan to seduce men into a drowsy state, and then to beguile them with some dream. When the duties of religion become irksome, then he presents some novelty which allures and deceives us; whereas, had we been in life and vigour, we should have detected the deceit.

There are no greater objects of pity in the world than men who are admired by all around for their nice discernment and fine taste, in every thing of a worldly nature, but have no taste for the riches that endure for ever—no love for God or his Word—no love for Christ or their souls. In such a state, however admired or respected, they cannot see the kingdom of God.

A spiritual man is a character that rises far above all worldly wisdom and science. He is described by our Lord as "born of the Spirit." Spiritual senses are given to him. He has a spiritual taste that rejects whatever is injurious, and gladly receives whatever is salutary to the spiritual life; he "desires the sincere milk of the Word, that he may grow thereby." He has a spiritual sight; he "looks not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." He smells a sweet savour in the things of God; "His name is as ointment poured forth." He has a quick feeling. And he has a spiritual ear; "My sheep hear my voice." He lives in a world of his own; he is tried by spiritual conflicts, and supported by spiritual comforts. If the things of God do not afford him consolation he droops, and nothing in this world can lift

up his head; he will say to every other object, "Miserable comforters are ye all." He is pursuing a spiritual end, and, while others boast and are puffed up with their great attainments, he is humbled in the dust and gives all glory to God.

There are critical circumstances under which a man who is in general on his guard is called to redouble his Christian vigilance. If he is about to encounter imminent danger, for instance, he will take care to secure himself by every possible means. A house may be well guarded and secured; but if there is any fear and expectation of thieves, every place will be doubly barred and watched. Good care may be taken in the general habits of a family to guard against fire; but if it be known that a spark has fallen among any combustibles, every possible search is made to discover it and to prevent its ravages. Thus should every servant of Christ redouble his guard in critical circumstances. He should remember that, while awful providences seem to be threatening us, and while we are surrounded with dangers on every side, and while the enemy of our souls is "going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour," it ill becomes us to trifle. Let us stir up ourselves, and attend to our Master's admonition, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord."

If St Paul had not been an entire character, he would not have spoken so ingenuously of himself as he does in

the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. He would have acted as many others have done; he would have put the best aspect on things. He would not have opened "the chambers of imagery," and have showed, while all the church was admiring him, what was passing within. Here were real simplicity and humility—nothing of that Pharisee which he once was. The Pharisee is become a Publican; the reality is coming forward; and he seems to say, "Is any man groaning under 'a body of sin and death?'—on searching his heart, does he find that therein 'dwelleth no good thing?' This is my case also; and if I have anything wherein to glory, it is in Christ and not in myself."

Charity should teach us to exercise hope and love toward all men—hope toward those who are without, and love toward those who are within the walls of the city of God. Of those without, we are apt to despair too soon, and to say, "There is no hope," when we should labour to allure them into the church of God, and to impress them with a sense of its glory and its privileges. Toward those within the walls, we sometimes fail in the exercise of love; we are too much influenced in our feelings toward them by a difference of education, taste, or disposition; while the great question ought to be, "Are they really 'fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God?'" and if so, whatever their defects may be, we ought to honour and love them as the "temples of the Holy Ghost?"

When Christians are delivered from trouble they are

apt soon to forget it, and to lose sight of the holy resolutions formed while under affliction: the strong impressions soon decay. Whereas, if we were enabled "to glory in tribulation"—if our conscience were made tender—if more reality were put into our prayers—we should take heed how we give way to an evil heart of unbelief; we should remember, too, how our troubles were brought on us, and the benefits which we received while they continued; we should watch that we might not estimate them falsely; and at all times we should bear it in our mind, that it is not suffering which hurts us, but sin.

Some men will follow Christ on certain conditions—if he will not lead them through rough roads—if he will not enjoin them any painful tasks—if the sun and wind do not annoy them—if he will remit a part of his plan and order. But the true Christian, who has the spirit of Jesus, will say, as Ruth said to Naomi, "Whither thou goest, I will go!" whatever difficulties and dangers may be in the way.

It is our happiness, as Christians, that however we may change our place, we shall never change our object. Whatever we lose, we shall not lose that which we esteem "better than life." God has made to us this gracious promise, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them." And though we may endure much affliction, and pass through many deep waters, yet this is our honour and comfort, "The Lord is with us!" And then, what is difficulty?—what is tribulation?—what

is death?—Death to a Christian is but an entrance into the city of God! it is but joining a more blessed company, and singing in a more exalted strain, than he can do in this world.

The *way* of every man is declarative of the *end* of that man.

How difficult is it to show those who are in the house of mourning, that God is teaching them that, if they had not leaned so much on their creature-supports, they had not been so broken! Still they are crying, "O Absalom, my son, my son!" Why is it that we are shocked to see the world falling to pieces around us, when we shall leave it ourselves to-morrow—perhaps to-day? We forget that it is the design of God to dash every thing to pieces. It is by these trials that we begin to learn we have been walking by sense rather than by faith, and looking at our children and our possessions as though we were never to lose them.

It is by faith that we are relieved under the difficulties of sense. Sense revolts when it views our great High Priest on the cross—faith glories in this object. Sense talks like the Jews: "He saved others: himself he cannot save: if he be now the King of Israel, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe him." Faith lays hold on him as the Saviour of the world, and cries, "Lord! remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!" Sense envies the pro-

perous worldling, and calls him happy—faith goes into the sanctuary, to see what his end will be. When the waves run high, sense clamours—faith says, "Speak but the word, and the winds and waves shall obey thee." When we feel our "earthly house of this tabernacle" taking down, sense sinks—but faith says, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Wisdom prepares for the worst; but folly leaves the worst for that day when it comes.

Abraham teaches us the right way of conversing with God: "And Abraham fell on his face, and God talked with him!" When we plead with him, our faces should be in the dust: we shall not then speak lightly of him, nor complain; nor will there be any more boasting. We shall abase ourselves and exalt God.

The Christian's secret intercourse with God will make itself manifest to the world. We may not see the husbandman cast the seed into the ground, yet when the corn grows and ripens we know that it was sown. The mere professor, who may be found everywhere but in his secret chamber, may think that with care he shall pass for a good Christian; but he mistakes, for the spirit will discover itself of what sort it is. He who would walk safely and honourably, must walk closely with God in secret.

A variety of circumstances render the sinner's first approaches to Christ difficult. They who find an easy access will find an easy departure when troubles arise.

The most likely method we can take to hasten the removal of what we love, is to value it too much—to think on it with endless anxiety—to live on its favour with solicitude. It shall soon either become a thorn in our side, or be taken away.

"Be ye not unequally yoked." If a believer marries an unbeliever, the miseries which ensue are endless. Were they determined in kindness to grant all they could to each other, yet they live as in two separate worlds. There is a great gulf between them which cannot be passed without the grace of God, on which, while all should hope and pray for it, none should presume. They cannot taste the same pleasures, nor share the same sorrows, nor pursue the same objects, nor walk in the same path. What hope, then, can there be of comfort? Every Christian finds the corruptions of his own heart, the snares of the world, and the devices of Satan, together with innumerable secret anxieties, quite enough to struggle with in his journey to heaven, without adding another to his difficulties.

In studying the Word of God, digest it under these two heads—either as removing obstructions which keep God and thee asunder, or as supplying some uniting power to bring God and thee together.

Perhaps it is a greater energy of divine power which keeps the Christian from day to day, from year to year, praying, hoping, running, believing, against all hin-

drances—which maintains him as a *living* martyr,—than that which bears him up for an hour in sacrificing himself at the stake.

By the course of his providence, God will assert the liberty of his council.

Let me ask, every day, what reference it has to the day of judgment, and cultivate a disposition to be reminded of that day.

Indulge not a gloomy contempt of anything which is in itself good; only let it keep its place.

God has called us to meet his best gift to man, his only-begotten Son—not in a splendid court, but in a manger!—in the wilderness!—in Gethsemane!—before the high priest, when they spat in his face, and buffeted him, and smote him!—at the cross!—and at the sepulchre! Thus it is that he corrects the pride and ambition of the human heart!

There is in sin not only an infinite mischief done to the man, but it is accompanied by an infatuation that surpasses all description. When the heart declines from God and loses communion with Christ, the man resembles one in a consumption, who is on the brink of the grave, and yet talks of a speedy recovery. A

death will come on the spirit which will be perceived and felt by all around, yet, when the most affectionate friends of such a man attempt to expostulate, they often find him not only insensible but obstinate and stout-hearted. He who, like Sampson the champion of Israel, lays his head in the lap of temptation, will rarely rise again as he lay down: he may say, "I will go out, as at other times before, and shake myself;" but "he wists not that the Lord is departed from him." "Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not."

The whole life of Christ was one continued expression of the same desire—"Let me lay aside my glory, let me expire on the cross, so that thy kingdom may come!" And the blood of every martyr who ever suffered in the cause of God cried, "Let thy kingdom come."

Growth in grace manifests itself by a simplicity—that is, a greater naturalness of character. There will be more usefulness, and less noise; more tenderness of conscience, and less scrupulosity; there will be more peace, more humility; when the full corn is in the ear, it bends down because it is full.

The history of all the great characters of the Bible is summed up in this one sentence—they acquainted themselves with God, and acquiesced in his will in all things.

God's way of answering the Christian's prayer for an

increase of patience, experience, hope, and love, usually is to put him into the furnace of tribulation. St James therefore says, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." People of the world "count it all joy" when they are in ease and affluence; but a Christian is taught to "count it all joy" when he is tried as gold in the fire.

In Christ we see the most perfect exhibition of every grace to which we, as his followers, are called. Let there be but in us that poverty of spirit; that disposition to bear with provocations, and to forgive injuries; that obedience to God and acquiescence in his will; that perseverance in doing good; that love which overcometh all difficulties; that meekness, humility, patience, compassion, and gentleness which were found in Christ; and if any man should be so ignorant and debased as to imagine that this is not true dignity of character, let it be remembered that this was "the mind which was also in Christ Jesus."

Looking back is more than we can sustain without going back.

When the multitudes followed our Lord on a particular occasion, although he wished for retirement, and had gone purposely to seek it, yet he gave up his design and attended to them. Mark the condescension and tenderness of such conduct, in opposition to a sour, monastic, morose temper! We are too fond of our own

will. We want to be doing what we fancy mighty things; but the great point is, to do small things, when called to them, in a right spirit.

The world will allow of a vehemence approaching to ecstacy, on almost any occasion but that which, above all others, will justify it.

A Christian will find his parenthesis for prayer, even through his busiest hours.

We treat sensible and present things as realities, and future and eternal things as fables; whereas the reverse should be our habit.

An enthusiast will court trouble, and that for itself; but a Christian, while he does not court it, yet rejoices in it; not for its own sake, but because he knows that "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope—a hope that maketh not ashamed." While patience is the fruit of his conflicts and trials, he gains experience by them; he acquires the knowledge which a traveller obtains in performing a long journey; he is in possession of a bundle of choice maxims and observations, gathered with much pains; he is taught by them to know his own heart; he is brought acquainted with the faithfulness and mercy of God, in holding him up in the deep waters, and accompanying him through the fire of affliction. And this experience pro-

duces hope,—a hope that he is savingly united to Christ; a hope that he is in the church of God; "a hope of the glory of God;" a hope that "maketh not ashamed," keeping us steady at anchor through every storm, and when every other support fails.

There are but two states in the world which may be pronounced happy—either that of the man who rejoices in the light of God's countenance, or that of him who mourns after it.

Let the warm-hearted Christian be careful of receiving a wrong bias in religion. When a ball is in motion, almost anything presented to it obliquely will turn it wholly out of its course. Beware, therefore, of a wrong direction in Christianity. Fix your attention ever on such examples as St John and St Paul, and hear how they speak: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha."

God denies a Christian nothing, but with a design to give him something better.

God teaches some of his best lessons in the school of affliction. It is said that St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians has quite the spirit and air of a prison. That school must be truly excellent which produces such experience and wisdom.

We cannot build too confidently on the merits

of Christ as our only hope; nor can we think too much of "the mind that was in Christ," as our great example.

A Christian does not "glory in tribulation," as he does in the cross of Christ. The cross of Christ is the object in which he glories; but he glories in tribulation as an appointed means and instrument in the hand of God of acomplishing his own pleasure and promoting our real good.

Never was there a man of deep piety who has not been brought into extremities—who has not been put into the fire—who has not been taught to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him!"

A Christian's steps are not only safe, but steady,—"He that believeth shall not make haste." When danger approaches, he shall not be thrown into confusion from his alarm, so as to be ready to say, "Whither shall I run?" but finding himself on safe ground, he shall be quiet. Being built on the sure foundation and "stablished in Christ," he shall not make haste in his expectations; he shall not make haste with respect to the promises, as though they were long in their accomplishment, knowing that "all the promises of God are Yea, and in Christ, Amen." In affliction he shall not make haste in running to broken cisterns, as Asa did when, "in his disease, he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians;" he shall not be alarmed or driven about as one who has not a stronghold to enter,

but shall say, "None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy." With respect to his character, the Christian shall not make haste: if a cloud come over his reputation, and men will suspect his integrity without grounds, he will commit himself to God, and wait his opportunity, and not make rash haste to justify and clear his character.

When a man can say, "My God!" if he can add no more, that is sufficient: for my God is all-wise in appointing, and almighty to uphold and to deliver. My God is a father to me in Christ; yea, he is a father who hid his face from Christ for my good. If, then, I am in darkness, let me remember that God never had a son that was not sometimes in the dark; for even Christ, his only-begotten Son, cried out, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

Few Christians, if any, sufficiently honour Christ, as governing their concerns. They do not say, "Now, while I am praying on earth, my Saviour is working for me in heaven. He is saying to one, 'Do this!'—and to another, 'Do that!'—and all for my good!" While Jeremiah was, doubtless, crying to God out of the dungeon, Ebed-melech was interceding for him with the king, and they were preparing the means of his deliverance. See Jer. xxxviii.

Let the restless, comfortless state of a backslider, distinguish him from an apostate.

If you have set out in the ways of God, do not stumble at present difficulties. Go forward. Look not behind.

Something must be left as a test of the loyalty of the heart—in paradise, the tree; in Israel, a Canaanite; in us, temptation.

Religious joy is a holy, a delicate deposit. It is a pledge of something greater, and must not be thought lightly of: for let it be withdrawn only for a little, and, notwithstanding the experience we may have had of it, we shall find no living creature can restore it to us, and we can only, with David, cry, "Restore unto me, O Lord, the joy of thy salvation."

A Christian should beware of that temptation, "Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?" He should remember, if it is a time of extremity, that is the very reason why he should wait. If his way is so hedged up that he cannot go forward, he should say, "Now is the time for me to stand still, and wait till God opens my way." "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path."

Human nature is always putting forth its fears and unbelief in anxious questions concerning to-morrow, or some threatening calamity; but Christ says to every Christian, "'Let not your heart be troubled, neither let

it be afraid: I go to prepare a place for you;' and I will protect and guide you throughout the journey thither."

"God with us," is the traveller's security. Jacob was destitute; he had a long and dreary journey, but God said, "Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest."

God calls not for "thousands of rams," nor "ten thousands of rivers of oil;" he calls not his creatures to live in sackcloth and ashes, nor sets them to perform long pilgrimages, nor to inflict pains on their bodies. No! the rigours of superstition are from man. The voice of God is, "Be happy, here and for ever! Fly that which will make you miserable everywhere! 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!'"

The voice of Christ is, "My son, give me thy heart!" And to him who obeys, he will say, "Go in peace!—go into the grave! go to judgment! go into eternity!—go in peace!"

A Christian must stand in a posture to receive every message which God shall send. He must be so prepared as to be like one who is called to set off on a sudden journey, and has nothing to do but to set out at a moment's notice; or like a merchant who has goods to send abroad, and has them all packed up and in readiness for the first sail.

How many people go out of their sphere under good pretences.

A person who objects to tell a friend of his faults, because he has faults of his own, acts as a surgeon would who should refuse to dress another person's wound, because he had a dangerous one himself.

When the most insignificant person tells us we are wrong, we ought to listen. Let us believe it possible we may be wrong when any one supposes we are; and enter into the true littleness which consists in receiving correction like a child.

No man rejects a minister of God who faithfully performs his office, till he has rejected God.

The plainest declarations of God's favour, and the strongest encouragements, are generally manifested in the darkest night of trial. Who could be more destitute than Jacob, when he lay down in the desert with a stone for his pillow? See also Acts xxvii. 20–24; 2 Cor. i. 3, 4, 5.

"The pride of Israel testifieth to his face; and they do not return to the Lord their God." This is the worst symptom in a sinner—when he is too proud to go to God. Whatever be our condition, if there is contri-

tion of spirit under it, there is hope of that man. There is no room for despair, to whatever lengths a man may have gone in sin, if he can smite on his breast, and say, "O Lord, though my sins testify against me, yet thou art a God of compassion. Do thou it for thy name's sake."

A Christian should never attempt to try his state while under a temptation; he might as well attempt to examine the face of the moon while she is under an eclipse. But when he finds corrupt nature setting in with a temptation—and who has not felt this?—let him remember his great Physician. This is the glory of the Son of God, that no case, either of the body or of the soul, was ever found too hard for him! Blessed be God that we have in Him a hiding-place, a covert from the storm, a refuge from all our enemies.

The great care of the man who is content with the form of godliness without the power is, that everything should be right without; while the true Christian is most careful that everything should be right within. It would be nothing to him to be applauded by the whole world if he had not the approbation of God and his own conscience. Real religion is, therefore, a living principle. Any one may make a show and be called a Christian, and unite himself to a sect, and be admired; but for a man to enter into the sanctuary; to hold secret communion with God; to retire into his closet, and transact all his affairs with an unseen Saviour; to walk with God like Enoch, and yet to smite on his breast

with the publican, having no confidence in the flesh and triumphing only in Christ Jesus—these are the life and acts of a new creature.

O Lord! let me have anything but thy frown; and anything with thy smile! *

Whatever below God is the object of our love, will, at some time or other, be the matter of our sorrow.

Take care, Christian! whatever you meet with in your way, that you forget not your Father. When the proud and wealthy rush by in triumph, while you are poor and in sorrow, hear the voice of your Father, saying, "My son, had I loved them, I should have corrected them too. I gave them up to the ways of their hearts; but to my children, if I give sorrow, it is that I may lead them to a crown of glory that fadeth not away!"

It is by faith that we contemplate unseen things. To the eye of a clown a planet appears but a twinkling star; but, if he looked through a telescope and were able to calculate, he would perceive that it was a great world, and would be astonished at its distance and magnitude. While the gay and the busy are moving

* "Give what thou canst, without thee we are poor;
And with thee rich, take what thou wilt away."
Cowper, Task, v.

on their little mole-hills, full of anxiety, Faith thus reaches beyond the world: it views death as at hand; it looks at heaven, and catches a glimpse of its glory; it looks at hell, and sees the torments of the condemned; it looks at judgment, and realises that awful day; it looks at eternity, and says, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Where there is a real character, a man will not sit down in the Christian conflict and say, "If I must carry about with me this body of death, I must submit. I must bear these enemies as quietly as I can." No! he will say, as St Paul seems to say, "I will be on no terms with sin! I will raise an outcry against the corrupt nature! I will triumph in my Physician! His grace is sufficient for me: I will wait for a cure, and wait for it in the appointed way. I see light, and hope, and liberty; and I thank God that, if I am a sinner, yet I am a saved sinner!"

God "hath set the day of prosperity and the day of adversity, the one over against the other," as the clouds are gathered for rain by the shining of the sun, and, if for a moment they are blown aside, we must expect their return. Where in our sky should we look for clouds? Where it is brightest—where our expectations

are highest. Our sharpest sorrows arise out of our sweetest comforts. Rachel said, "Give me children, or else I die;" and, in obtaining what she esteemed her highest comfort—what she would have at any rate—was hidden the cause of her sharpest grief. God gave her children; and, in bearing her second child, "it came to pass, as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni,"—the son of my sorrow.

Who is the most miserable man on earth?—and whither shall we go to seek him? Not to the tavern! not to the theatre! not even to a brothel! but to the church! That man who has sat Sabbath after Sabbath under the awakening and affecting calls of the gospel, and has hardened his heart against these calls, *he* is the man whose condition is the most desperate of all others. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! and thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell!"

Give every kind of knowledge its due attention and respect, but what science is to be compared to the knowledge of Christ crucified? Had a traveller lost his way in some desert, where he had wandered till he was fainting with hunger and thirst, for what would he first ask?—for music?—for paintings? No! he would ask for bread—for water. Anything else offered him would be a mocking of his misery.

What an oppressive burden is taken off a Christian's

shoulders, by his privilege of leaving all consequences, while in the path of duty, to God! He has done with "How shall I bear this trouble?—how shall I remove this difficulty?—how shall I get through this deep water?" but leaves himself in the hands of God.

We may form some idea of the joys of heaven by the innocent pleasures which God grants us on earth. Here is a fine situation, with wonderful prospects—everything to delight the senses,—yet all this we find in a world which is under a curse! What then may we not expect in a heavenly world, where God exercises all his power for our blessedness?

However ill men may treat us, we should never give them a handle to say that we misbehaved ourselves. Were I to meet my most bitter adversary, and know that he was come with the most malicious intentions, I should endeavour to be so on my guard, that he could not lay his finger, with truth, on any part of my conduct.

The motive determines the quality of actions. One man may do a penurious act because he knows he shall be put to difficulties if he does not; another may do the same from mere avarice. The king of Edom offered up his son on the wall, and his abominable cruelty excited just indignation: but Abraham, having in intention offered up his son, is held forth to all generations for this act as the Father of the Faithful.

It is always a sign of poverty of mind where men are ever aiming to appear great; for they who are really great never seem to know it.

What the world calls the best company, is such as a pious mechanic would not condescend to keep; he would rather say, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity!"

One way of reading the Bible with advantage is to pay it great homage: so that when we come to any part which we cannot connect with other passages, we must conclude that this arises from our ignorance, but that the seeming contrarieties are in themselves quite reconcilable.

Young Christians, on setting out in life, often mistake greatly in not sufficiently attributing events to the immediate providence of God. They are not reluctant, at the end, to acknowledge that their way has been directed; but they do not enough mark it as they go on. There is a habit of saying, "Such a thing may turn up," as if it depended on chance; whereas nothing will turn up but what was ordered long before. One cause of this evil is that the divinity of our day deals too much in commonplace: certain fundamental truths are set forth; and if a man professes these truths, too little account is made of the faith, dependence, and other graces of a Christian. When a man becomes a Christian, he is written upon as it were, "To be pro-

vided for!"—and he ought, therefore, to notice as he goes on how Providence does provide for him.

Men mistake in nothing so much as when they resist their dispensation; for, while God shutteth up a man, there can be no opening. Resistance does but make the dispensation harder to be borne. Job says, "He teareth himself in his anger: but shall the rock be removed because of thee?" The man is, as it were, in a labyrinth; and the hand which brought him in must be the hand to conduct him out.

We require the same hand to protect us in apparent safety as in the most imminent and palpable danger. One of the most wicked men in my neighbourhood was riding near a precipice, and fell over; his horse was killed, but he escaped without injury. Instead of thanking God for his deliverance, he refused to acknowledge the hand of God therein, but attributed his escape to chance. The same man was afterwards riding on a very smooth road, his horse suddenly tripped and fell, and threw his rider over his head, and killed him on the spot, while the horse escaped unhurt.

If a man is dead in sin, our attempting to correct his false notions is like laying a dead man straight who before was lying crooked. The man is dead, and will remain so; though before he was lying crooked, and is now lying straight. It matters little what right no-

tions we may have, while we are dead in sin; for we shall never act up to them, till God awakens our hearts.

To have too much forethought, is the part of a wretch; to have too little, is the part of a fool.

Self-will is so ardent and active, that it will break a world to pieces, to make a stool to sit on.

We are too little acquainted with the sacred character of God. "A certain man sold a possession, and brought a certain part of the price." We should have thought this a generous act; but God saw that there wanted a right estimation of his character. Many sins are suffered to pass, to be punished hereafter; but God sometimes breaks out and strikes an offender dead, in vindication of his own glory.

Remember always to mix good sense with good things, or they will become disgusting.

Things are not to be done by the effort of the moment, but by the preparation of past moments.

If there is any person to whom you feel dislike, that is the person of whom you ought never to speak.

Irritability urges us to take a step as much too soon, as sloth does too late.

When we read the Bible we must always remember, that, like the holy waters seen by Ezekiel,* it is in some places, up "to the ancles;" in others, up "to the knees;" in others, up "to the loins;" and in some, "a river" too deep to be fathomed, and that "cannot be passed over." There is light enough to guide the humble and teachable to heaven, and obscurity enough to confound the unbeliever.

True religion, as revealed in the Scriptures, may be compared to a plum on the tree, covered with its bloom. Men gather the plum, and handle it, and turn and twist it about, till it is deprived of all its native bloom and beauty; the fairest hand would as much rob the plum of its bloom as any other. Now all that little party-spirit, which so much prevails among men, and which leads them to say, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos," is but handling the plum till it loses its bloom.

There are but two classes of the wise—the men who serve God, because they have found him; and the men who seek him, because they have found him not. All others may say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

Philosophy is a proud, sullen detector of the poverty

* Ezek. chap. xlvii.

and misery of man. It may turn him from the v
with a proud, sturdy contempt; but it cannot
forward and say, "Here are rest, grace, peace, stre
consolation!"

We hear much of a decent pride—a becoming
—a noble pride—a laudable pride! Can that b
cent of which we ought to be ashamed? Can th
becoming of which God has set forth the deform
Can that be noble which God resists, and is determ
to debase? Can that be laudable which God
abominable?

Many things are spoken of in the Scriptures as g
but there is not one thing emphatically called g
which does not relate to Christ or his coming.

Say the strongest things you can, with candour
kindness, to a man's face; and make the best e
you can for him, with truth and justice, behind
back.

Many people labour to make the narrow way w
They may dig a path into the broad way, but the
to life must remain a narrow way to the end.

All extremes are error. The reverse of error is
truth, but error. Truth lies between these extreme

I have no doubt but that there are persons of every description, under every possible circumstance, in every lawful calling among Christians, who will go to heaven; that all the world may see, that neither their circumstances nor calling prevented their being among the number of the blessed.

God has given us four books—the book of grace, the book of nature, the book of the world, and the book of providence. Every occurrence is a leaf in one of these books; it does not become us to be negligent in the use of any of them.

Eloquence is vehement simplicity.

God is omniscient as well as omnipotent; and omniscience may see reason to withhold what omnipotence could bestow.

Attend to the presence of God; this will dignify a small congregation, and annihilate a large one.

Having some business to transact with a gentleman in the city, I called one day at his counting-house; he begged I would call again, as I had so much more time to spare than he had, who was a man of business. "An hour is nothing to you," said he. "An hour nothing to a clergyman!" said I, "you seem little to understand the nature of our profession. One hour of a clergyman's time rightly employed, sir, is worth more to him than all the gains of your merchandise."

If a man has a quarrelsome temper, let him alone. The world will soon find him employment; he will soon meet with some stronger than himself, who will repay him better than you can. A man may fight duels all his life, if he is disposed to quarrel.

One day I got off my horse to kill a rat, which I found on the road only half killed. I am shocked at the thoughtless cruelty of many people; yet I did a thing soon after, that has given me considerable uneasiness, and for which I reproach myself bitterly. As I was riding homeward, I saw a waggon standing at a door with three horses; the two foremost were eating their corn from bags at their noses; but I observed the third had dropt his on the ground, and could not stoop to get any food. However I rode on, in absence, without assisting him. But when I had got nearly home, I remembered what I had observed in my absence of mind, and felt extremely hurt at my neglect; and would have ridden back had I not thought the waggoner might have come out of the house and relieved the horse. A man could not have had a better demand for getting off his horse than for such an act of humanity. It is by absence of mind that we omit many duties.

A wicked man is a candidate for nothing but hell! However he may live, if his conscience were awake, he would turn pale at this question, "What shall I do in the end thereof?"

There is a great defect in Gray's Elegy. You cannot read it without feeling a melancholy; there is no sunshine, no hope after death; it shows the dark side only of mortality. But a man refined as he was, and speculating on the bankruptcy of human nature, if he brought not evangelical views into the estimate, could describe human nature only as hopeless and forlorn; whereas, what he felt a subject of melancholy, is with me included in the calculation. I know it must be so, and according to my views should be disappointed if it were not so. "My kingdom," said our Lord, "is not of this world."

Revelation never staggers me. There may be a *tertium quid*, though we are not yet in possession of it, which would put an end to all our present doubts and questions. I was one day riding with a friend, we were discussing a subject, and I expressed myself surprised that such a measure was not adopted. "If I were to tell you one thing," said he, "it would make all clear." I gave him credit that there did exist something which would entirely dispel my objections. Now if this be the case in many instances between man and man, is it an unreasonable conclusion that all the unaccountable points which we may observe in the providence and government of God, should be all perfection in the Divine Mind? Take the growth of a seed—I cannot possibly say what first produces the progress of growth in the grain. Take voluntary motion—I cannot possibly say where action begins and thought ends. The proportion between a fly's mind and a man's is no adequate illustration of the state of man with respect to

God; because there is some proportion between the minds or faculties of two finite creatures, but there can be none between finite man and the infinite God.

A mouse that had lived all his life in a chest, says the fable, chanced one day to creep up to the edge, and peeping out, exclaimed with wonder, "I did not think the world was so large."

The first step to knowledge is to know that we are ignorant. It is a great point to know our place; for want of this a man in private life, instead of attending to the affairs in his "chest," is ever peeping out, and then he becomes a philosopher! He must then know everything, and presumptuously pry into the deep and secret counsels of God, not considering that man is finite, and has no faculties to comprehend and judge of the great scheme of things. We can form no other idea of the dispensations of God, nor can have any knowledge of spiritual things, except what God has taught us in his Word; and where He stops, we must stop. He has not told us why he permitted the angels to fall—why he created Adam—why he suffered sin to enter into the world—why Christ came in the latter ages—when he will come to judgment—what will be the doom of the heathen nations—nor why our state throughout eternity was made to depend on such a moment as man's life: all these are secrets of his council. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" God urges it on us again and again, that sin has entered, and that we must "flee from the wrath to come." Christ, in the days of his flesh, never gratified curiosity; he answered every in-

quiry according to the spirit of the inquirer, not according to the letter of the inquiry. If any man came in humility for instruction, he always instructed; but when any came to gratify a vain curiosity, he answered as when one said, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" —"Strive to enter in at the strait gate!" Or, as when another inquired, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" —"What is that to thee? Follow thou me."

We are too ready to say, in trouble, "All these things are against me!" but a Christian should say, "This or that may seem against me; but there is mercy for me—there is a Saviour—there is God's Word—and there are his ordinances." He should be more careful to enumerate what is for him, than what is against him. He should look over the list of his spiritual and temporal mercies, as well as that of his sorrows; and remember that what things are against him, are so on account of his sin. Our pilgrimage is but short; let us make use of our helps and means. God has given us a guide and a support to lean on; when the clouds gather, we have only to look to Jesus. We are not to expect the joys of heaven while on earth; let us be content that there is a highway for us to walk in, and a leader to conduct us in that way.

It is a Christian's business, as much as possible, consistently with his duty, to lessen his cares and occupations in the world. It is very common to hear Christians complain what a hindrance business is, while they are, perhaps, at the very time, too anxious to increase it.

There is some fallacy, too, in the complaint; for, where there is a principle of grace, it will prevail even in a multitude of engagements. There is much difference between seeking busy situations, and being found in them.

What we call "taking steps in life," are most serious occurrences; especially if there be in the motive any mixture of ambition. "Wherefore gaddest thou about to change thy way?"

The dispensation of grace to some, is little more than a continual combat with corruptions: so that, instead of advancing, a man seems to be but just able to preserve himself from sinking. A boat, with the tide full against it, does well if it can keep from driving back, and must have strong force indeed to get forward. We must estimate grace by the opposition which it meets with.

How blessed is the Christian in the midst of his greatest troubles! It is true, we cannot say he is perfect in holiness—that he has never any doubts—that his peace of mind is never interrupted—that he never mistakes Providence; but after all, his is a blessed condition; for he is supported under his trials, and instructed by the discipline; and as to his fears, the evil under the apprehension of which he is ready to sink, frequently does not come—or it does not continue—or it is turned into a blessing.

One of the greatest impositions of Satan on the mind is that of quieting a man in the pursuit or possession of what is lawful. So that it is not murder, or adultery, or theft, which he is committing, all is well! Because a man's bed is his own, he may idle away in it his inestimable time! Because his business is lawful, a man may intoxicate his mind with the pursuit of it!

The very heart and root of sin is an independent spirit. We erect the idol *self;* and do not only wish others to worship, but worship it ourselves.

We must take care when we draw parallel cases, not to take such as are not or cannot be made parallel. For instance, we may ask before we act, "What would Jesus Christ do in this case? or what would St Paul?" but we cannot be guided by this rule in everything, because Christ's mission was peculiar—it was an unparalleled event—it was for three years only; and like a great fire, he was always burning—always intent on one point. St Paul also was in peculiar circumstances; he was set on an especial errand. In everything which is in any degree sinful, we should turn to these examples; but, in the conduct peculiar to our station, our application of these examples must be governed by circumstances.

Many inexperienced Christians are apt to look for wrong kinds of evidences, and so distress themselves about their state. The questions which we should put

to ourselves in seeking the best evidences are—"Do I hate sin? Is it my grand fear? Is it my grief that, while I have a good hope of pardon, I yet should make such ill returns? Have I brokenness of spirit?" Godliness is analogous to the principle of gravitation, in that it reduces everything to its proper centre.

The difference between what is called fate and predestination is something like that of a house without a governor and a house with a governor. The fatalist says, "Everything must of necessity be as it is—as a stone must fall to the ground, fire must ascend," &c. The predestinarian says that everything is determined by a wise Governor, who inspects, orders, and superintends the whole machine, so that a sparrow does not fall to the ground or a hair of the head perish without permission.

We are so accustomed to see sin within and without us that we seldom deeply feel it, or are so shocked at it as we should be were it less frequent. If an inhabitant of the court were to walk through some of the filthy streets and alleys of the metropolis, how would he be disgusted and terrified! while the poor wretches who live in them think nothing of the matter. Thus a clearer view of sin and of the holiness of God made the prophet cry out, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts."

It is much easier to settle a point than to act on it.

I once said to myself, in the foolishness of my heart, "What sort of sermon must that have been which was preached by St Peter, when three thousand souls were converted at once?" What sort of sermon?—such as other sermons: there is nothing to be found in it extraordinary. The effect was not produced by St Peter's eloquence, but by the mighty power of God, present with his Word. It is in vain to attend one minister after another, and to hear sermon after sermon, unless we pray that the Holy Spirit accompany his Word. "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

That humility which courts notice is not first-rate. It may be sincere, but it is sullied. Do not sound a trumpet, nor say, "Come and see how humble I am."

We should be careful never to discourage any one who is but searching after God. If a man begins in earnest "to feel after Him if haply he may find Him," let us be aware how we stop him, by rashly telling him he is not seeking in the right way. This would be like setting fire to the first round of the ladder, by which one was attempting to escape. We must wait for a fit season to communicate light. Had any one told me when I first began to think religiously that I was not seeking God in the right way, I might have been discouraged from seeking him at all. I was much indebted to my mother for her truly wise and judicious conduct toward me, when I first turned from my vanity and sin.

We should always record our thoughts in affliction—set up way-marks—set up our Bethels—erect our Ebenezers,—that we may recur to them in health; for then we are in other circumstances, and can never recover our sick-bed views.

A contemplative life has more the appearance of a life of piety than any other; but it is the divine plan to bring faith into activity and exercise. We choose that sort of walk which we like best: if we love quiet, we are for sedentary piety; but the design of God is to root us out of everything, and bring us into more useful stations.

A wretched prisoner chained to the floor for a length of time would deem it a high privilege to be allowed to walk across the room. Another, confined to lie on his back till it had become sore, would think it a great favour if he might be permitted to turn on his side for a few minutes. In a course of habitual pain I am thankful for five minutes freedom from suffering: how forgetful have I been of fifty years of tolerable ease! How unmindful are we of what we call common mercies!

In order to read the Bible with profit, we must begin by denying ourselves every step of the way; for, every step of the way, it will be found to oppose our corrupt nature.

Christians resemble travellers in a stage-coach. We are full of our plans and schemes, but the coach is

moving rapidly forward. It passes one mile-stone, and then another, and no regard is paid to the plots and plans of the passengers.

A Christian has advanced but a little way in religion when he has overcome the love of the world, for he has still more powerful and importunate enemies—self, evil tempers, pride, undue affections, a stubborn will. It is by the subduing of these adversaries that we must chiefly judge of our growth in grace.

A friend called on me when I was ill, to settle some business. My head was too much confused by my indisposition to understand fully what he said; but I had such unlimited confidence in him that I did whatever he bid me, in the fullest assurance that it was right. How simply I can trust in man, and how little in God! How unreasonable is a pure act of faith in one like ourselves, if we cannot repose the same faith in God!

SOME NEGATIVE RULES

GIVEN TO A YOUNG MINISTER

GOING INTO A SITUATION OF PECULIAR DIFF

As I know you have received much good a
would suggest to you a few hints of a negativ
with a view of admonishing you to be carefu
you are doing your work, not by any mistakes
own to hinder your success:—

I. BY FORGETTING THAT YOUR SUCCESS WITH
IS VERY MUCH CONNECTED WITH YOUR PI
CHARACTER.

Herod "heard John gladly," and he "dic
things;" because he knew the preacher to be
and holy man. Words uttered from the hea
their way to the heart by a holy sympathy. Cl
is power:—

"A good man seen, though silent, counsel gives."

If you would make deep impressions on oth
must use all means to have them first formed
own mind. Avoid, at the same time, "all app

of evil"—as a covetous or worldly, a vain or assuming, a careless or indevout deportment. Never suffer jesting with sacred persons or things. Satan will employ such antidotes as these to counteract the operation of that which is effective and gracious in a minister's character.

II. BY PLACING YOUR DEPENDENCE ON ANY MEANS, QUALITIES, OR CIRCUMSTANCES, HOWEVER EXCELLENT IN THEMSELVES.

The direct way to render a thing weak is to lean on it as strong. "God is a jealous God; and will utterly abolish idols" as means of success. He designs to demonstrate that men and creatures are what he makes them, and that only. This also should be your encouragement:—looking, in the diligent and humble use of means, to that Spirit of life and power without whose influence all your endeavours will be to no purpose, you have reason to expect help suited and adequate to all your difficulties.

III. BY UNNECESSARILY APPEARING IN DANGEROUS OR IMPROPER SITUATIONS.

It is one thing to be humble and condescending: it is another to render yourself common, cheap, and contemptible. The men of the world know when a minister is out of his place—when they can oppress him by numbers or circumstances—when they can make him laugh, while his office frowns. Well will it be for him if he is only rendered absurd in his future public admonitions by his former compliances; well if, being

found like St Peter, on dangerous ground, he is not seduced virtually, at least, to deny his Master.

IV. BY SUSPICIOUS APPEARANCES IN HIS FAMILY.

As the head of your household you are responsible for its appearances. Its pride, sloth, and disorder, will be yours. You are accountable for your wife's conduct, dress, and manners; as well as those of your children, whose education must be peculiarly exemplary. Your family is to be a picture of what you wish other families to be; and without the most determined resolution, in reliance on God, to finish this picture, cost what it will, your recommending family religion to others will but create a smile. Your unfriendly hearers will recollect enough of Scripture to tell you that you ought, like the primitive bishop, to be "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity: for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"

V. BY MEDDLING BEYOND YOUR SPHERE IN TEMPORALS.

Your aim and conversation, like your sacred call, are to be altogether heavenly. As "man of God," you have no concern with politics and parties, and schemes of interest, but you are to live above them. There is a sublime spirit in a devoted minister, which, as one says of Christianity itself, pays no more regard to these things than to the battles of rooks, the industry of ants, or the policy of bees.

VI. BY VENTURING OFF GENERAL AND ACKNOWLEDGED GROUND IN SPIRITUALS.

By giving "strong meat" instead of "milk" to those who are yet but "babes;" by "giving heed to fables, which minister questions rather than godly edifying;" amusing the mind, but not affecting the heart; often disturbing and bewildering, seldom convincing; frequently raising a smile, never drawing a tear.

VII. BY MAINTAINING ACKNOWLEDGED TRUTH IN YOUR OWN SPIRIT.

Both food and medicines are injurious if administered scalding hot. The spirit of a teacher often effects more than his matter. Benevolence is a universal language; and it will apologise for a multitude of defects in the man who speaks it; while neither talents nor truth will apologise for pride, illiberality, or bitterness. Avoid, therefore, irritating occasions and persons, particularly disputes and disputants, by which a minister often loses his temper and his character.

VIII. BY BEING TOO SHARP-SIGHTED, TOO QUICK-EARED, OR TOO READY-TONGUED.

Some evils are irremediable; they are best neither seen nor heard. By seeing and hearing things which you cannot remove, you will create implacable adversaries; who, being guilty aggressors, never forgive. Avoid speaking meanly or harshly of any one: not

only because this is forbidden to Christians, but becau
it is to declare war as by a thousand heralds.

IX. BY THE TEMPTATIONS ARISING FROM THE FEMALE SEX.

I need not mention what havoc Satan has made i
the church by this means, from the fall to this da
Your safety, when in danger from this quarter, lies i
flight—to parley, is to fall. Take the first hint fro
conscience, or from friends.

In fine, "Watch thou in all things; endure affli
tions; do the work of an evangelist; make full pro
of thy ministry:" and then, whether those around yo
acknowledge your real character or not now, they sha
one day "know that there hath been a prophet amon
them."

DYING MINISTER'S FAREWELL:

A FRAGMENT.

N a Christian minister feels the springs of life g way, his faculties decaying, his voice failing, his s sinking; though he may not have it in his power y, as the apostle did to his friends, "I know that l, among whom I have preached the kingdom of shall see my face no more," yet he should stand to part from his flock, and every sermon should lt by him as if it were his last.

Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned clare unto you all the counsel of God." And what I declared that counsel of God to be? All the us distinctions of the schools? All the peculiari- nsisted on so strongly by different sects? No such . I have followed the great apostle in "testifying ıtance toward God, and faith toward our Lord ı Christ."

ıere has been a slander brought against religion, we are not agreed as to the truths we should set e men. I say, It is false! we are agreed. All know anything of real religion are agreed, that

the substance of the matter is contained in "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

If a man, like the prodigal, feels that he has left his father's house, turned his back on God, and is become a fool and a madman for so doing, and that there is no hope but in his returning again; if such a change of mind is wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, as he wrought in David, when he cried, "Wash me throughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin;" if, like Peter, he goes forth weeping bitterly, feeling that he has acted foolishly and wickedly, and that his only hope is in the mercy of God through the Saviour, then the man enters so far into the spirit of religion,—"repentance toward God."

But does he rest in this? Nay, he knows that if he could offer "thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oil," he could make no satisfaction for "the sin of his soul." He looks to the atonement—to "Him whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood."

"Repentance toward God" must be accompanied by "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not: but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." These men are enabled to say with St Paul, "'I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.' I have no refuge but in him; no other hope, no other plea. All my confidence before God is grounded on this, that 'He

suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.' "

If a minister testifies these things, if he speaks plainly and simply these grand essential truths of God's Word, though he die before another Sabbath return, he may rest in peace, leaving the issue in God's hand.

The ground of a minister's own solid satisfaction cannot be popularity—for even to Simon Magus "all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God;" neither can he ground his satisfaction on the exercise of strong and enlarged talents—for even Balaam was a man of extraordinary endowments; nor can it be on his success—"for many," saith our Lord, "shall come to me and say, Have we not done many wonderful works in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils? Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you." As though he had said, "I deny not the works, but ye are evil men."

But a minister's satisfaction must be grounded on the faithful discharge of his office in the delivery of his message. A prince sends a special messenger to his rebellious subjects, with offers of pardon; in examining his conduct, he will not inquire whether they received and approved him or not: the question will be—"Did you deliver my message? Did you deliver it as one that believed it yourself?—as one in earnest?" If a man should come and tell you, with a cheerful countenance and careless air, that your house was on fire, and that you and your children would be burnt in the flames if you did not make haste to escape, you would not believe him. You would say, "He does not believe it himself, or he would not be so unfeeling as to speak of it in such a manner."

If a minister delivers his message, then no scorn, no reproach that may be cast upon him, can take away his rest—he has done his duty. When the king sent out his servants to invite men to his feast, they excused themselves on various pretences; but the servant might say, "No matter! I have declared the message; I may rest in having done my part, though no success seems to attend my pressing invitations."

I would lodge, therefore, my appeal in your consciences, "I take you to record;" I appeal to conscience: for there is a conscience in man; and in serious moments it will speak out. It wrung from Joseph's brethren that confession, "We are guilty concerning our brother." It forced Balaam himself to cry out, "Let me die the death of the righteous; and let my last end be like his." It tormented the traitor Judas into that self-accusation, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood."

When a young person has been talked to by his parents—when they have represented to him the misery and ruin of a wicked course, and of bad habits—he might affect to brave it out at the time; but he has gone afterward weeping through the streets, because conscience would speak.

But when the Spirit of God softens a man's heart—when he is made to feel "what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against God"—then a faithful minister's appeal to that man is like that of St Paul to the Thessalonians: "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, we behaved ourselves among you that believe. As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, (as a father doth his children) that ye would walk

worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."—(1 Thess. ii. 10–13.)

It is most affecting to see to what miserable shifts men will have recourse, in order to evade the truth.

"It is irrational," says one, "to insist so much on certain peculiarities of doctrine." But whose reason shall be the judge? "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;" but, "It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

"It is unnecessary;" says another; but has God commanded, and do we pronounce his commands unnecessary?

"It is disreputable." Did Christ regard reputation? Nay, "he made himself of no reputation."

"It is a narrow way"—Ah! there, indeed, you pronounce truly! The way to heaven is a narrow way! But what says the Judge? "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

O how distressing is it to observe many to whom, we cannot but fear, the gospel which they hear preached from Sunday to Sunday, is but the "savour of death!" If God has made a difference in any of us, let us not forget to whom we are indebted.

Brethren, you are my witnesses. I take you to

record, that you have had the whole counsel
declared unto you—that all curious and metap
inquiries, all critical and conjectural points, ha
carefully avoided for your sake. I have attem
clear my ministry of all disputable subjects, in o
set before you the plain fact of the death and re
tion of Jesus Christ, and of salvation through h

But, consider, you also must give an accou
must give an account whether I plainly and sim
clared the truth as one who felt its importanc
was in earnest. You must give an account w
you have gone away from this place as if yo
heard nothing to the purpose, and immediately
pated your thoughts with some trifling subject-
mere secular concern—or, whether what you
brought you to your knees before God, beseechi
to seal and impress his truth upon your hearts.

Oh! consider the satisfaction you will find in
embracing "all the counsel of God!" Consid
soon the time will come, in which it must be yo
satisfaction that you have embraced it! Let it b
prayer as you go hence—"O God! give me g
repent with that repentance which is unto life!
me serious. Teach me what I must do to be
Help me to believe the record which thou has gi
thy Son. Give me faith to receive the atoneme
set to my seal, that 'there is none other name
heaven given among men whereby we must be
but the name of Jesus Christ."

Come to your Saviour with humility as a s
come with gratitude and love. "For ye are no
unto the mount that might be touched, and that
with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, an

pest; and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words:" when, "so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake: but ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, and to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." See, then, that ye refuse not him that speaketh; but, "receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us hold fast grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."—(Heb. xii. 18–28.)

THE END.

Popular Companion to the Bible.

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